

**WISE Parent Handbook**  
**2021-2022**

v. August 2021



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# ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook is a resource for parents and guardians that includes valuable information about the WISE<sup>1</sup>. Contained within, you'll find:

- An introduction to the school.
- Important information about your child's experience.
- Our Health and Emergency protocols.
- Contact information for our Administration, Faculty, and Board of Directors.

As a partner in your child's education, we invite you to read through this handbook carefully. Together we are crafting an inspiring and nurturing place to enrich and educate our children.

In addition to this Handbook and our [website](#), we offer an active WISE [Facebook page](#) and [Facebook WISE Parent Connection group](#) to help you connect and stay informed. A copy of our school policy manual is available to you in our office.

We encourage you to participate in the life of the school to build meaningful community connections and deepen your connection to, and appreciation of, Waldorf education. We host a number of events like: our annual Gateways conference, parent meetings, volunteer opportunities and special events like festivals, fairs, and talks hosted by the WISE. Your presence and participation supports and enriches the school environment and your child's educational experience.

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<sup>1</sup> Waldorf Independent School of Edmonton

# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Waldorf Independent School of Edmonton. Established in September 2011, the WISE aims to help students nurture their sense of self, develop and understand their relationships to the world and immediate community, and respect nature and each other through their observations and experiences.

The WISE offers:

- A broad curriculum that intersects the sciences, arts, and humanities.
- A progression of learning based on the synergy of the child's physical and inner development as put forth by Dr. Rudolf Steiner.
- An emphasis on personal development and the integration of knowledge from the student's own life.
- A school day structured around the 'main lesson' – a concentrated daily two-hour session in which one subject is explored for three or more weeks, followed by lessons devoted to two foreign languages, language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, physical activities, and artistic pursuits.
- A single teacher who may remain with a class for several years.
- A Private Accredited School education that meets Alberta Education's curriculum requirements.

# SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

The WISE has an engaged parent community. Parents, along with staff and faculty, are an integral part of school life and the overall running of the school. The WISE strives to provide an accessible Waldorf education for children and families. We look to the pedagogical concepts put forth by Rudolf Steiner supported by and paired alongside evidence-based educational research to guide and foster the physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual potential of the children.

## Values Statement

- We value children and honour the whole child.
- We value Waldorf Education for what it brings to each family.
- We value our unique community built on mutual respect and integrity.
- We believe that humanity is interconnected and that it is our shared responsibility to participate in the healing and nurturing of our world.
- We value the spiritual intention guiding our school, and we honour the diverse beliefs of our community.
- We strive to foster a community that upholds the rights, safety, and well-being of all staff and students. We recognize individual, institutional and systemic biases against gender, culture, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, ability, mental health, and socioeconomic status exist and believe every student and staff member has the right to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe work and learning environment.

## Waldorf Education

Waldorf education was founded in Germany in 1919 by Rudolf Steiner, an Austrian philosopher and educator. Its primary philosophy seeks to address the following questions:

*“How can education best serve our total human needs?”*

*“How can education prepare each child to flourish in society, not only intellectually, but with [their] creative human qualities developed and his/her/their integrity intact?”*

Waldorf educators believe strongly that the education of the future must have four dimensions: academic, practical, aesthetic, and ethical. In particular, we believe in the universality of ethical education.

Waldorf education prepares the student for post-secondary education and life with a structured rhythm and inspiring lessons within the Waldorf classroom that balances the perceived permissiveness of late-twentieth-century schools and the over-disciplined, overly-structured schools of the preceding era. This balance provides freedom and creativity, guidance for growth, and discipline of the will and mind – in short, the education of the total child.

# SCHOOL INFORMATION

## Address & Contact Information

The Waldorf Independent School of Edmonton is located at:

7211 – 96A Avenue NW

Edmonton, AB T6B 1B5

Phone: 780-466-3312

[info@thewise.ca](mailto:info@thewise.ca)

[www.thewise.ca](http://www.thewise.ca)

Office Hours : Monday - Friday : 8:15am – 4:00pm

If you need to drop off registration, tuition, or discuss program changes, please do so during business hours, or email [registrar@thewise.ca](mailto:registrar@thewise.ca).

## School Entry and Dismissal

Grades 1-9			Kindergarten
8:25 am		First Bell	<u>AM or PM:</u>
8:25 am	- 10:25 am	Main Lesson	Monday - Friday: 8:25 am - 11:30 am
10:25 am	- 11:00 am	Morning Recess	Monday - Friday: 12:10 pm - 3:15 pm
11:00 am	- 11:40 am	Period 1	
11:40 am	- 12:20 pm	Period 2	
12:20 pm	- 12:40 pm	Lunch	<b>Nursery Wondergarten</b>
			<u>AM or PM:</u>
12:40 pm	- 1:15 pm	Recess	Wednesday – Friday: 9:00 am - 11:30 am
1:15 pm	- 1:55 pm	Period 3	Wednesday – Friday: 12:55 pm - 3:25 pm
1:55 pm	- 2:35 pm	Period 4	
2:35 pm	- 3:15 pm	Period 5	

*Classes use designated entrances to allow for enhanced hand hygiene measures. Teachers will communicate with the families prior to the beginning of the school year which entrance the class will be using.*

## Attendance

Regular and punctual attendance is mandatory; it supports healthy rhythms for the child and the class as a whole. If your child is absent, you can reach our office by phone or email no later than 8:45 am.

**Office Phone:** 780-466-3312

**Email:** [absences@thewise.ca](mailto:absences@thewise.ca)

If your child is absent and has not been reported by 8:45 a.m., we will call you at home or work to ensure they are well and safe. If your child is absent for an extended period, please contact your teacher and the office well in advance.

Absences from class can be detrimental to your child's learning. We ask that you take your holidays during scheduled school holidays and refrain from removing your child from classes for vacation reasons. Because of the non-textbook-based approach of the Waldorf curriculum, expectations for teachers to prepare separate homework for absent students are minimal.

Saturday festivals, evening events, and overnight trips are an integral part of the WISE curriculum. Please carefully note all extraordinary events on the school calendar and plan your schedules with the understanding that participation impacts your child's integration, success, and wellbeing in class.

Unexcused absences/tardiness above 30% of the academic year are reported, as required, to Alberta Education and Social Services. Follow-up with parents/guardians may take place at their discretion.

## Arrivals

It is vital that students arrive on time as it supports the work of the teachers and contributes to the positive learning environment of your child and their class. Please ensure that your child has had a healthy breakfast to prepare them for the day. Please avoid all media exposure before school begins, including the radio, on the morning drive. A conversation about the day or silence will have a calming effect on the child, supporting a good day at school. **Upon arrival, students will line up at their designated class entry point and will be met by their class teachers to come into the school.**

## **Late Arrivals**

If students arrive later than 10 minutes after their specified class entry time, students should go directly to the main (north) entrance, wash their hands, and let the office reception know they have arrived. Students may have to line up after the preceding class to come in to wash their hands. If the outside door is locked and no one is at the designated class entry point, students must come to the main entrance, wash hands, let the office reception know that they have arrived, and go directly to their classroom. When the classroom door is closed, students must knock and wait until the teacher can welcome them into the class for the day. No late slips will be given by the office. Teachers are tracking attendance, including late arrivals.

### **Kindergarten & Grade 1:**

A parent or responsible older sibling (grades four and up) will accompany the student to their classroom and wait until the class teacher can welcome them into the class for the day. Students may not be unattended while they wait to enter the classroom.

### **Grade 2 and up:**

Unaccompanied students in grades two and up will go directly to their designated class entry point and line up after the preceding class. If the outside door is locked and no one is at the designated class entry point, students must come to the main entrance, wash hands, let the office reception know that they have arrived, and go directly to their classroom. If the classroom door is closed, the student will knock and wait until the teacher can welcome them into the class for the day.

## **Departures - Attended**

For pick up at the end of the day, please ensure that you wait at the designated pick up area to gather your child(ren). For safety and security reasons, we do not want students running out of the school or into the street to greet a parent. Please discuss these rules with your child.

If you are picking up your child(ren) during the school day for an appointment, please visit the office to sign out your child. The office will then call to let the class teacher know that the parent or authorized pick-up person has arrived, and dismiss the student to the main office entrance for departure.

If a friend or family member will be picking up your child, please complete or update your child's Authorized Child Release form to ensure they are authorized to do so.

## **Departures - Unattended**

If a student is leaving school on their own, you must complete an Unattended Release Form provided by your Class Teacher/Office at the start of the school year.

If students leave school to go home for lunch, they are expected to return to school before afternoon classes begin.

If they are not returning after lunch, you **MUST** inform the office.

If a student leaves the school unattended at the end of the day, the WISE and the Waldorf Education Society of Edmonton are not responsible for their supervision once their class has been dismissed.

Students with signed Unattended Release Forms must go home at dismissal and may not remain at the school to play unattended. Teachers or administration may revoke an unattended release if deemed necessary to support the safety of the student.

### **Kindergarten and Grade 1:**

May not have an Unattended Release Form. They must be dropped off and picked up using the student sign-in and sign-out process by an authorized adult or authorized older sibling (grades four and up) at the start end of each day.

### **Grades 2 and up:**

May have a signed Unattended Release for the end of the day.

### **Grades 4 and up:**

May have a signed Unattended Release to go home for lunch and at the end of the day. Parents must discuss this arrangement with the office and teacher.

## **Morning Supervision**

Morning supervision is offered outdoors, starting at 8:15 a.m for Grades two and up. Children are welcomed into school by their teachers at 8:25 am.

## Lunch and Outdoor Recess

Students eat lunch and snacks in their classrooms supervised by their teachers. Students are then expected to go outside to play during recess under the supervision of teachers/playground supervisors.

We modify the outdoor play schedule when it is severely cold, but prefer that students have some outdoor play during recesses. Please note that we will remain indoors if temperatures are below -25C (windchill inclusive); however, students may still be permitted to go outdoors by request for a short time with access to indoor spaces. During hot summer days, students will still have recess outdoors unless the parent makes alternate arrangements with the class teacher and office. In all cases, it is vital that students are dressed appropriately for outdoor play.

If your child is in Grade 4 or up and has a signed Unattended Release Form, they are authorized to go home for lunch, and the WISE will not be responsible for their supervision.

## Parking

Parents are encouraged to park or pull through our school parking lot during drop-off/pick-up whenever possible.

The numbered parking stalls along the east side of the school are for teacher and staff parking.

Please be courteous by keeping traffic flowing and our neighbours happy. **Do not park in or block neighbour driveways. Never stop in the middle of the road to drop off/pick up students or do a U-turn on the front street. Be mindful of parking well away from fire hydrants. Always use the parking lot to turn around.** If you volunteer in the school, please use our parking lot.

## Access to WISE

As necessary, parents may access the school any time during the hours of operation, 8:15 am to 8:15 pm on school days. Side doors are only accessible to key holders. To gain entry, please use the main (north) entrance. If exiting a side or back door, please ensure that it is closed and locked behind you. Propping open doors poses a safety risk and invites mice into the school.

## **Dogs at WISE**

Many students have a fear of or allergies to dogs, even hypoallergenic dogs. Therefore, we have a strict no-dogs policy in either the school or on school grounds, including drop-off and pick-up times.

## **Student information**

The WISE is legally required to maintain personal information about students in their student records. Student records are confidential and stored in a lockable cabinet. Information stored in student files shall only be accessible to an employee of WESE<sup>2</sup> if the information is necessary for the performance of their duties, or to The Government of Alberta as outlined in Sections 23, 40, 41, and 43 of the School Act.

The WISE is required to disclose the information contained in a student record to the Government of Alberta in accordance with regulations under the Education Act. In addition, the Waldorf Education Society of Edmonton may disclose information as required to the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice or to the Department of Solicitor General and Public Security or their designates, when required.

Parents may access and review information stored in their child's file by making an appointment with the WISE Administration or WISE Registrar.

## **Allergies**

WISE Staff are committed to providing an Allergy Safe & Aware Environment for all students. Parents will be asked to provide information on their children's food allergies and special diets at the time of enrolment. If a student in any program has been identified as having a severe, life-threatening allergy to a particular food or substance, that food or substance will be banned from the student's classroom. We will communicate these banned foods to parents as soon as possible. In addition, individual classrooms will post the 'banned' food list on the class door to notify those entering the specified classroom.

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<sup>2</sup> The Waldorf Education Society of Edmonton

## Personal Belongings

Each child will be assigned a cubby, storage space, or locker for their personal belongings. We ask that the following be brought the first day and maintained throughout the year:

- A labelled bag or backpack to be stored at school containing a complete change of clothes.
- A pair of indoor shoes for your child that remains at the school - These shoes should be non-lacing for Grade 2 and under and have solid, non-marking soles (no slippers)

In addition to these items, your Class teacher may request that you provide specific items for your child.

**Please label all items with a permanent marker or tags** including all outdoor clothing, shoes, backpacks, lunch kits, and containers. A great way to do this is to order labels from our fundraiser through Mabel's Labels. They have packages just for school that include clothing, shoe, and container labels. Orders can be placed online at the following link:

[www.wise.mabel's labels.com](http://www.wise.mabel's labels.com). Please select our school name during your order. Labels are sent directly to your home.

Lost and found areas are located in the school hallway. Please check them regularly to retrieve your family's missing items. Periodically, clothes and found items will be laid out for parents to look through, after which the bins will be emptied and donated to charity.

Please ensure that your **child(ren) does not bring toys or special belongings to school** unless invited to do so by the teacher. Unfortunately, these items can be very distracting in class and are easily lost.

## Outdoor Clothing

The WISE supports a culture of daily outdoor play, in all weather conditions and seasons. We spend extended periods outside as part of the daily school activity, and students will participate and enjoy themselves more fully when they are dressed for the weather.

In the interest of health and hygiene, clothing made of breathable fabric is strongly suggested. Cotton and wool are excellent choices. Some suggestions are listed below, and layered clothing is recommended for all weather conditions.

Each child must have clothes appropriate for the season/weather. Students will go outside for recess up to -25C, inclusive of windchill. During extreme heat or times of poor air quality, recess times may be shortened.

Hot weather

Sun hats, sturdy closed-toed shoes for playing on the playground and in the garden, an extra layer such as a sweater

Cold weather

Warm winter jackets, snow pants, long underwear, hats, mittens, scarves, warm socks, and winter boots

Wet weather

Rain pants, raincoats, hats, rubber boots, and an extra change of clothes

## Food

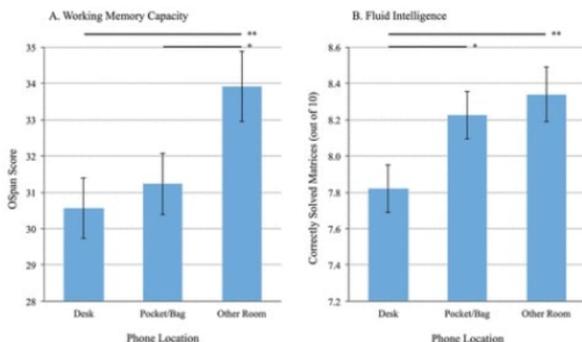
Food is an integral part of the student health. We encourage you to pack healthy meals for your child to support their concentration and stamina at school. We try to honour and instill a no food waste habit and encourage families to limit the use of single-use packaging. Please do not include sugary snack foods and candy in lunches. Choosing healthy snack alternatives limits the social, emotional, and physical ramifications that junk food creates in the classroom.

<https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/tips-for-healthy-eating/school/#section-1>

<https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/1c291796-4eb0-4073-be8e-bce2d331f9ce/resource/3319786c-1df1-43ca-8693-067f733682dc/download/nutrition-guidelines-ab-children-youth.pdf>

# Cell Phones

## Study & focus with your phone outside the room



"Although these devices have immense potential to improve welfare, their persistent presence may come at a cognitive cost. In this research, we test the "brain drain" hypothesis that the mere presence of one's own smartphone may occupy limited-capacity cognitive resources, thereby leaving fewer resources available for other tasks and undercutting cognitive performance. Results from two experiments indicate that even when people are successful at maintaining sustained attention—as when avoiding the temptation to check their phones—the mere presence of these devices reduces available cognitive capacity. Moreover, these cognitive costs are highest for those highest in smartphone dependence." - Ward et al. 2017

Source: Centre for Humane Technology

The use of cell phones is not permitted by students during school hours. If a student needs to bring a phone to school, it must be handed into the class teacher prior to entering the classroom and may be collected again at the end of the school day. You can support your child in adhering to this by informing the school if your child requires a phone before and after school. Staff support students in making calls during the school day when needed on school phones and, should the child require access to it during the day, please send a formal letter in writing to the school, and the student may ask the teacher to use it as needed for required purposes.

If you wish to learn more about the impact of phones on student learning and evidence-based recommendations for interfacing with technology, we highly recommend visiting the Centre for Humane Technology; For Students, Parents & Educators:

<https://www.humanetech.com/families-educators>

## **WISE Dress Guidelines**

We aim to provide a comfortable, beautiful, and safe environment that nourishes each student's growth and development, enriches their imagination, and satisfies their enthusiasm for learning. How students dress can affect their engagement in activities and social interactions, their self-esteem and confidence.

Please ensure that students come to school in clean and comfortable clothing, suitable for Edmonton's variable weather, and appropriate for the many activities that fill each school day.

The WISE faculty, staff, and administration will work together to uphold the dress guidelines. Consequences for improper dress include supplying the student with an article of weather appropriate clothing, or a follow-up conversation with the parent. To support every student and family, an email home/contact by the class teacher may occur, so our teachers, school, and community can support each other and work together.

We ask that you help promote the following values we share as a Waldorf community:

### **1. Promoting age-appropriate dress and respecting childhood:**

- Ensure clothing is functional rather than fashion-conscious.
- All classes include movement activities. Clothing should therefore cover the waist and hipline when arms are lifted.
- Consider modesty to ensure students' comfort level. Wherever possible, select fabrics that will absorb perspiration and promote hygiene. Being in comfortable clothes for a wide range of movements ensures students can fully participate and engage in all activities.
- The top of the shoulder should be covered to protect from the cold as well as the sun.
- Tank tops, racerbacks, halter tops, muscle shirts, and tops with thin straps such as spaghetti straps should be avoided.
- Students should avoid make-up, nail polish, hair dye, and obtrusive jewelry.
- Analog watches (not digital watches) may be worn once students have been taught to read them in grade three.

## **2. Avoiding clothing as a vehicle for marketing and creating social identity:**

- Please avoid clothing that uses students as a vehicle for marketing. With this in mind, we ask that you select clothing free of pictures, logos, brand names, words, and messages.
- At WISE, we strive to simplify the school environment, making it free from pressures and competition and the identity-defining power of brands and consumerism.
- Clothing containing images tends to focus the eye on the image rather than the person.
- Clothing with sexual overtones, derogatory slogans, images of violence, racism or sexism, or any discriminatory message is not permitted.

## **3. Support health, safety, confidence, and a sense of self-respect:**

- Sunhats and winter hats must be worn outdoors at ALL times for early childhood through class 4 students.
- Hats (grades 1-6), bandanas, hoods, other head coverings, coats, and heavy jackets are for outside, not inside wear (grades 1-9).
- Junior High Division (grades 7-9) will be permitted to wear a hat (not a hood) indoors unless they are asked to remove it during class time, guest presentations, musical performances, morning verses, school-wide assemblies; or it is unacceptable due to one of the following: it obscures the vision of the person behind, is disruptive to the class learning environment, covers the eyes or ears. If a student requires multiple reminders regarding these requirements, a student may lose the privilege of wearing a hat due to repeated verbal reminders
- The WISE strives to be free of chemical fragrances, perfumes. These products may cause headaches and other sensitivities or allergic reactions to those around us.
- All students wear indoor shoes. Flip flops, backless shoes, shoes with high heels, clogs, slippers, and crocks are not suitable within the school environment. They do not support the growing foot and can be dangerous in everyday school life's many varied activities and actions.
- Shorts are permitted but must rest on the mid-thigh.

#### **4. Supporting suitable wear for athletics, movement, and outings:**

- Teachers may provide specific dress guidelines for cultural/social outings, or particular outdoor education activities or field trips. Expectations for students' dress must be maintained for events off-campus.

## **Home Life**

There is much you can do at home to enhance, support, and compliment your child's experience in school. We encourage you to speak with your child's teachers to reaffirm or discover ways you can support the rhythms and positively contribute to your child's physical and social environment. In addition, the teachers and office need to be aware of significant changes in your child's home life, such as illness, parent's absence, important life events/changes, need for medication, or a move. This information will help the teachers give the adequate support necessary in periods of transition.

## **Sleep**

Healthy sleep habits and regular bedtimes deeply support children's ability to learn and emotionally regulate their school days. Healthy sleep has been demonstrated to support focused learning and attention, positive behaviour, memory, and overall physical and mental health. Please ensure your child(ren) comes to school refreshed and able to take on the riches of the day. We strongly recommend following the [American Pediatric Association](#) guidelines for sleep (as follows):

- Ages 3-5: 10-13 hours
- Ages 6-12: 9-11 hours
- Ages 13-18: 9-12 hours

## **Media**

A central aim of Waldorf Education is to stimulate the healthy development of the child's imagination and creative thinking capacities that supports ingenuity and problem solving for life. Waldorf educators, alongside emerging research, share concerns that electronic media hampers the development of the child's imagination and attention. They are concerned about the physical effects of the medium on the developing child and the content of much of the programming.

The WISE is a predominately media-free space. Videos, pre-recorded music, and electronics in the classroom are minimal until introduced in specific programming in Junior electives options and Grade 8 & 9 Computer Science classes. Health lessons discuss media literacy and safe use of media beginning in Grade 4 and earlier if needs emerge. Assistive technology for students with specific identified learner needs is essential to ensuring that all students should be able to demonstrate their learning and will be supported at the WISE as part of an IPP.

We encourage you and your family to consider how you use media and carefully look at how media impacts your child. Unfortunately, digital and media platforms are not designed with the best interests of the developing child in mind. We ask that you do not send your child to school with any electronic devices like games or personal computers. We ask that families do not allow their children to be exposed to any screen time during the school week and significantly limit screen time during the weekends.

For more information about electronic media and its effects on young children, we suggest you visit the [Centre for Humane Technology](#) and read the following article: <http://movingtolearn.ca/>

## **ASSESSMENT**

Assessment is an essential part of Waldorf Education. While our assessment includes written report cards, they are only one of the ways we track and communicate student progress and achievement in addition to sharing evidence based on demonstrated knowledge, skill and attitude over time through their application in a range of relevant, accurate and authentic contexts. If there are concerning issues, your child's teacher will contact you immediately to open up a conversation. Likewise, should you have concerns, please contact your child's teacher promptly.

*Assessment is a process that involves judgement based on accurate observation, weighing of evidence, critical thinking, care, interest and ... appreciation of people and processes of learning. Assessment is an ongoing process that rarely requires a final or ultimate judgement. It is careful, respectful and tentative, provisional and iterative. It can have an enriching effect. It can open doors, rather than closing them. Assessment can have the interests of the child or young person at heart, or it can be a response to external requirements, quotas, targets and so on. At its best, it is the act of understanding what children can and need to learn next. (Swaffield 2008).*

The WISE delivers education in alignment with Alberta Education's Program of Studies Outcomes in tandem with contemporary interpretations of Rudolf Steiner's indications for Waldorf curriculum, and delivery based upon principles of diversity, equity and inclusion. One of the ways we help all students be successful is by continually improving the way we assess and evaluate what and how students learn and how we share with parents and guardians about how your child's learning is progressing at school. Through pedagogical study with the Faculty, research, and discussion, the WISE has elected to shift our assessment and reporting practices to support clear and proactive communication with families and accurate and transparent assessment as follows.

## **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parent-Teacher Conferences take place in October and March. Please look at the school calendar to take note of these dates. During Parent-Teacher Conferences, parents can discuss their observations, share insights, ask questions, or bring forward concerns and hopes for their children's learning.

We expect that every family participates in the Parent-Teacher conferences by sending at least one parent to attend. If parents cannot attend during the allotted time, teachers will make alternate arrangements (within reason) to meet at another time. Junior high students will also be asked to participate in part or all of the teacher conference meetings; your Class Teacher will determine and communicate this with parents. This opportunity gives students a chance to reflect on their learning and share goals and strategies that support their learning. In this way, they are active participants in the assessment process.

WISE teachers are committed to proactive and transparent communication around student learning. They are dedicated to contacting families to initiate conversations and provide timely feedback around arising observations or concerns that place each child's best interests for optimal holistic education at the forefront of discussions. Parents are also welcome and encouraged to reach out anytime throughout the year to ask questions or share concerns or observations in this regard outside of parent-teacher conferences.

Parent-Teacher Conferences will be structured to ensure discussion of students' academic and social growth and development, and a review of the student's learning to date with specific

examples of formative and summative assessments that indicate the student's knowledge and skills, attitudes and competencies. The parent conferences will also be structured around collaborative goal setting for the student's learning in relation to Waldorf pedagogical outcomes, Alberta Education program of studies outcomes, and skills development.

The shift to emphasize a structured student-centered dialogue through Parent-Teacher Conferences will allow teachers to better communicate evidence based on demonstrated knowledge, skills, and attitude over time and in different situations, particularly those demonstrated through performance or real-world, hands-on tasks. This evidence may be captured in the form of observational notes, written work, learning products, oral work, performance, or photographs. Our goal is to empower students to understand their learning, share insights and develop goals, and include parents and teachers in a rich student focused discussions.

## **Skills Assessment and Year-end Reporting**

The WISE will provide two formal written assessments in grades 1-9, or report cards, distributed twice per year. At the end of January, a skills assessment report card will be shared, and at the end of June, a comprehensive year-end report will be sent home. Both of these reports are written and informed by the class teacher and subject teachers. The year-end reports typically will be mailed to you at the address you have given to the office a week after the end of the school year. Be sure to inform the office of any changes so that you receive this important document. Kindergarten students receive a formal report card only once a year in the form of the year-end report.

## **DISCIPLINE AT THE WISE**

We believe that every student and staff member has the right to a welcoming, respectful work and learning environment. Like all school environments, the WISE expects grade school students to be respectful of teachers, fellow students, the school environment and follow all school rules. A teacher will make every effort to meet the student's needs in their care by providing a rich, age-appropriate curriculum. When faced with discipline challenges, the teacher will use multiple resources to creatively and collaboratively support the unique needs of the child and class.

School resources include the WISE Discipline Procedure, Tiered Behaviour Strategies (see Appendix), WISE Student Code of Conduct and Suspension Guidelines in close collaboration with parents and administration.

A Behaviour Report Form will be used to communicate with families about specific incidents at school and will be signed by the family, teacher, and administration and kept on file. All communication and discussion regarding children and behaviour will be done professionally and confidentially holding the child in the highest regard.

## **WISE Student Code of Conduct**

As a student at The Waldorf Independent School of Edmonton, I will:

- Attend consistently, be punctual, and arrive prepared for class.
- Give my best to my academic, artistic, and extracurricular pursuits.
- Maintain an environment that respects diversity and honours the educational, emotional, physical, and spiritual wellbeing of myself, all other students, and staff.
- Behave in a manner that reflects our shared responsibility to participate in the healing and nurturing of our world.
- Behave in a manner that ensures the rights of all individuals within the school are maintained and is conducive to my learning and the learning of others.
- Keep personal belongings orderly, and hallways clear and quiet during class time.
- Take ownership for my attitude and behaviour, maintaining an atmosphere of mutual respect and integrity.
- Be considerate and respectful of others.
- Stand up for the well-being of others and myself regardless of peer pressure.
- Demonstrate care and concern for school property and the property of others.
- Respect the authority of all staff within the school community.
- Respond appropriately to the direction of staff at school and during school activities.
- Ensure that correspondence from the school is communicated home.
- Dress in a manner that is respectful of our grades K-9 school culture and allows full participation in class and school activities.

### **Technology Agreement (Gr 7-9)**

- I agree to use technology and information resources in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner.
- I also understand that acceptable uses of technology and information resources are activities that are curriculum-based and support teaching and learning.
- I may not use personal digital devices during class time.
- I can only use the software installed on school computers and will not install additional programs.
- I will only access, and author appropriate content while on school property.
- While at WISE, my use of technology may be monitored, and the administration has the right to review and or remove anything that may jeopardize the safety and wellbeing of another.
- The same conduct codes and responsibilities apply to the use of any personal devices, including laptops, cell phones, and cameras that I bring to school. The administration has the right to review and or remove anything that may jeopardize the safety and well-being of another student.

### **Technology Communication Guidelines (K-Gr 9)**

Waldorf Independent School of Edmonton strives to maintain an atmosphere of support, respect, privacy, and dignity for each member of our community. To that end, we have created the following guidelines for electronic communication, and social media use that we expect each member of our community to follow, no matter their position or age:

- **Respect the privacy of our students and teachers** by not posting pictures or videos to social media without explicit permission.
- **Respect the integrity of our community** by taking up grievances with individual teachers or administrators, rather than writing class- or community-wide emails or posting on social media.
- **Respect the privacy of each community member** by not using e-mail or any other address list generated by the school for personal or business purposes, including advertising.

- **Nurture the dignity of each individual** by refraining from obscene or defamatory communication in speech, writing, and other modes of expression, including electronic expression, in interactions with the school community.
  
- **Cultivate social harmony** by expressing themselves in a manner that promotes cooperation and does not interfere with the educational process. This guideline applies not only to speech, but also to written and electronic communications such as email, social media postings, and direct messaging apps.
  
- **Observe appropriate boundaries** by limiting communication to proper channels, using teachers' school email accounts rather than text messages or social media to communicate about school-related matters.
  
- **Strive for good habit life around phone and email communications** by attempting, whenever possible, to limit late-night and weekend communications. We encourage all WISE employees to model and practice media balance in their personal and professional lives, so teachers are encouraged to respond to emails only within normal school hours and will specify 'office hours' where they will be able to respond to messages or calls live.
  
- **Embody our community values of truthfulness, dignity, and respect for the inherent worth of every human being** whenever we are associating ourselves with the school, whether in the classroom, in the wider community at a school-related function, or in electronic and social media communications.
  
- **Promote healthy technology use** by familiarizing yourself with reputable information from sources such as World Health Organization(WHO) and American Pediatric Association (APA) and media use in school-aged children
  
- **When using school video chat platforms**, please practice these guidelines
  - use your real name
  - use an appropriate picture for your school Gmail account
  - we recommend you mute yourself right away

- remember on video chat; we see you (dress appropriately, don't take your device to the bathroom)
- in-class groups, open chat and type **question** so the moderator/teacher can call on you
- **do not** take screenshots, pictures, or recordings of a teacher or fellow students

## **Suspension or Expulsion**

Suspension (see appendix) or expulsion from the school may occur for the following infractions either through intentional or negligent conduct:

- Violation of the Student Code, including the Technology Agreement (see Discipline Policy for more details).
- The use of profanity, racial comments, sexual comments, insulting statements, uttering threats, and/or any physical altercation.
- Bullying, harassing, threatening, or intimidating other students, including initiation rituals in person or online.
- Being in possession of a weapon, replica weapon, or dangerous goods to harm, intimidate or threaten others.
- Being involved in the use of, possession of, or sale of drugs, alcohol, or any illegal substance.
- Smoking or vaping on school property.
- Any offence which threatens the safety or wellbeing of students or staff.
- Remaining at the scene or being complicit while others participate in any of the above actions.
- Stealing/shoplifting during school hours.

## **INDIVIDUAL PROGRAM PLANS & BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT PLANS**

Teachers may identify that your child would benefit from specialized supports and services to meet their learning needs. If so, they will contact you to discuss an Individualized Program Plan (IPP) or Behaviour Support Plan (BSP). At the WISE, the IPP is an internal record of your child's progress related to specific academic goals and strategies. A Behaviour Support Plan relates to social/emotional support strategies and goals.

An IPP/BSP allows teachers to effectively communicate about your child's progress and what accommodations and supports are being provided to help them be successful in their learning. Typically, these are created at the beginning of the year; however, a teacher may approach families at any time if they feel it would be beneficial to the child's learning.

IPP/BSP development and review meetings follow an annual schedule:

1. Initial meeting with parents and teacher (Oct)
2. IPP 1<sup>st</sup> Review with parents (Feb/ Mar)
3. IPP 2<sup>nd</sup> Review with parents (May/Jun)

Signed copies are secured in the office as part of the student file and are shared with Specialty Teachers and substitutes to ensure a continuity of approach.

## **HEALTH CARE PROVISION AT THE WISE**

We aim to keep the students and staff at the WISE healthy and safe. In case of illness, we will provide your child with the care they need until you are able to attend to them.

### **Illness**

Do not send your child to school if your child:

- Has vomited;
- Has respiratory illness symptoms (inclusive of Covid-19)
- Has had diarrhea or loose stool;
- Has a new unexplained rash or cough;
- Requires greater attention than can be provided without compromising the care of other children in the program;
- Displays any other signs or symptoms of illness

Should your child start displaying symptoms of illness at school, staff will notify you to pick them up immediately. If a parent cannot be reached, one of your two emergency contact persons will be contacted. Your child can return to school once symptoms have fully resolved, when they no longer pose a health risk to other students or employees. Bringing a child into the school with any of the above symptoms puts other students and staff at risk of getting sick. For

more information, please review the Communicable Disease Policy, WESE Policy Manual Policy number HP1104.

All parents/guardians must complete/update the medical information forms in the registration package each year including the names of emergency contacts for their child.

## **Illness While at School**

Students exhibiting signs of illness will be moved to the school's infirmary room, known to students as our **comfort room**. Parents/guardians will be notified and advised to pick up their child as quickly as possible. If the parent cannot pick up their child, the designated emergency contact will be contacted for student pickup. It is the expectation that students are picked up by the family or emergency contact. This is a responsibility to which all families must adhere.

Staff supervising symptomatic students must:

- Keep all other staff out of the infirmary room
- Provide the student with a face mask, regardless of grade
- Use strict handwashing techniques
- Maintain physical distancing where possible; and
- Wear gloves, mask, and protective goggles or face shield while attending to the student.

Staff supervising symptomatic students must:

- Keep all other staff out of the comfort room
- Provide the student with a face mask, regardless of grade
- Use strict handwashing techniques
- Maintain physical distancing where possible; and
- Wear gloves, mask, and protective goggles or face shield while attending to the student.

The staff supervising the student may use a contactless thermometer to take the temperature of the student (wrist). After the student is picked up, all items the student touched must be cleaned and disinfected.

Please note that WISE/WESE is required by law to report all communicable diseases to Public Health. Public Health will require contact information for the child's family. WISE/WESE has a policy of asking parents to report the disease themselves. Should your child contract a communicable disease, we request that you contact a Public Health Nurse at Bonnie Doon Public Health Clinic at 780-342-1520.

## **Emergency Injury**

If an illness or accident requires first aid, a WISE employee with first aid training will apply first aid. The parent/guardian will be contacted and asked to pick up their child to see a physician or rest at home if needed. If a child can return to class, they will be encouraged to join in classroom activities for the remainder of the day. In all cases, an Accident Report Form will be completed and signed by the teacher, administration, and parent and kept in the student's file.

If further medical assistance is necessary, WISE staff shall call for emergency assistance and will then contact the child's parents/emergency contact person. If a student must be transported to a health facility for emergency assistance, every effort will be made to contact a parent before the child leaves the school. However, the health of your child is the primary concern.

If further medical assistance is not necessary, but the WISE staff member judges that the child should be removed from the class, the parent/emergency contact will be called to come to pick the child up.

## **Head Lice**

Please do not send a child with head lice to school untreated. Your child may return to school after their first conventional treatment. However, if you are using an alternative head lice treatment, your child may not return to the school for ten days. For additional information:

<https://myhealth.alberta.ca/Health/pages/conditions>

## **Healing Basket**

We do our best to avoid bumps, cuts and bruises, yet sometimes it happens. Our office holds a healing basket that includes anthroposophic, homeopathic and Bach flower remedies.

Families can authorize the administration of these remedies to their children by completing a Healing Basket form provided by the class teacher.

# **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

In case of emergency, the WISE has procedures to ensure the safety of students and staff of the WISE. Emergency evacuation procedures are posted in each classroom and at each door of our school. Fire and Lockdown drills occur periodically through the school year, as required, to ensure WISE staff and students understand how best to respond in the case of an emergency.

## **Fire**

Should students need to evacuate the school for fire, WISE faculty will follow the Emergency evacuation procedures and lead the students to the muster site located in the soccer field south of the school.

A minimum of three practice fire drills will be held each year.

## **Lockdown**

Should the WISE need to initiate a Lockdown within or outside of the school, WISE faculty will follow their Emergency Lockdown procedures to either evacuate or keep students within locked classrooms until advised by the principal, administrator, or emergency personnel.

A minimum of one practice lockdown drill will be held each year.

# **SEVERE WEATHER**

## **Storm Conditions**

In the case of severe weather, such as a lightning storm, students will be kept indoors until the storm has passed. If the storm occurs during outside playtime, students will be instructed to calmly return to their classroom.

## **Extreme Temperature Conditions**

During the winter months, students will remain indoors if temperatures are below -25C, inclusive of windchill. Temperature readings and indoor recess notices will be posted at the office.

During hot days, students may have recess outdoors unless deemed inappropriate by the school administration, or if they have a medical condition that makes them more vulnerable to heat, or upon the request of their parents/guardian.

### **Poor Air Quality**

Environment Canada advises that students in good health can be outside when the Air Quality index is four or lower. Students at WISE may remain inside the school when the Environment Canada Air Quality index is rated five or higher, or if they have a medical condition that makes them more vulnerable, or at the request of their parent/guardian.

## **Program Closure**

The WISE will be closed in situations where severe weather or damage to the school property or site may cause danger to students and or staff. The criteria for school closure may include:

- a. Safety of travel on roads out of town and across the city.
- b. Weather conditions and weather forecasts.
- c. Consideration of what other institutions are doing, private and public.
- d. Safety and health of children to be considered, including:
  - i. Driving conditions
  - ii. Structural faults within the school building.
  - iii. Blocked access to the school site.
  - iv. Emergency repairs within the school building.

In the case of a program closure, you will be contacted by the WESE staff/Board at the earliest possible time.

## **WISE SCHOOL STRUCTURE**

Waldorf schools are structured with a collaborative leadership model with the board, faculty, and administration playing integral and interconnected roles. Like many young Waldorf schools, the WISE was founded by a dedicated group of parents that initiated the Waldorf Education Society of Edmonton (WESE) on June 4, 2002. Initially, all school operations were held by the WESE Board of Directors. The WISE continues to grow its capacity, transitioning from operational board to governance board with a collaborative leadership model at its heart; we hope to reach this goal by 2027. Volunteerism and community participation will always be an essential component of our unique community school.

## **WESE**

The Waldorf Education Society of Edmonton (WESE) has been in existence since 2002 when a gathering of like-minded individuals came together to form a formal group, which would support the development of Waldorf Education in Edmonton.

After a few years of small parent-child playgroups, held in community members' homes, WESE opened its doors to the first 'official' early childhood program in the spring of 2007. With the founding of the 'Little Tree Waldorf Centre,' WESE began hosting annual Pumpkin, Winter, and May Fair festivals open to the community at large.

The parent-child groups continued to grow, and in September 2008, WESE began our first Nursery School program. Students attending the parent-child groups made the transition into a warm, embracing classroom without their parents. Teachers led the students through a rhythmic morning of indoor and outdoor play, songs, and crafts twice a week.

In 2011, WESE launched the Waldorf Independent School of Edmonton (WISE) with a kindergarten and a combined Grade 1 & 2. WESE began offering Out-Of-School Care and Home School Arts Enrichment programs in addition to our popular nursery and parent-child programs.

Elected at our Annual General Meeting in the fall, the WESE Board of Directors is responsible for overseeing many aspects of WISE School operations, particularly the physical facilities, policies, and finances. The WESE board acts as the WISE School Superintendent. The WESE Board of Directors also organizes public festivals such as the Winter Fair and the May Fair, the

Gala fundraiser, and Gateways educational conference. Look for Board Position descriptions and Sub-Committee Terms of Reference at [www.wese.ca](http://www.wese.ca).

## Administration

The administrative leadership team at WISE is comprised of the Executive Administrator, Principal, and Financial Officer, supported by the Registrar, Administrative Assistant, and Administrative Coordinator. Their duties include:

- Developing Waldorf Curriculum and programming for the WISE in collaboration with faculty.
- Studying and aligning Alberta Education curriculum outcomes with WISE Waldorf curriculum.
- Reviewing of all school policies to be compliant with the School Act and legislative requirements.
- Ensuring early childhood licenses are up-to-date and compliant with legislative requirements.
- Supporting community outreach, providing tours, enrolling students, and welcoming families to WISE.
- Providing support to faculty for mentorship and professional development.
- Providing supports for children with unique learning needs.
- Processing all financial transactions.
- Ensuring the WISE school is well maintained.
- Maintaining secure student records.
- Executing outgoing communication, including school calendars and the Parent Handbook.
- Liaising with Alberta Education, AISCA (Association of Independent Schools and Colleges in Alberta), AWSNA (Association of Waldorf Schools of North America) and WECAN (Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America) ensuring we forecast and execute the goals of all WISE programming.
- Supporting and enacting WESE Board directives.

## **WISE Faculty**

All class teachers at the WISE possess a Bachelor of Education and are certified to teach in Alberta. In addition, our teachers attend specialized Waldorf Teacher training, professional development, and enrichment courses annually.

Faculty meet weekly for Division Meetings and bi-weekly for Faculty Council. They work together in a collaborative leadership model, engage in pedagogical study, conduct child and class studies, organize festivals, review school procedures, and report to the board monthly, through faculty representation on the board.

Faculty Council reviews all recommendations made by Divisions. Meetings are run based on a consensus-style model.

## **WISE Faculty Council**

The Faculty Council comprises 8-10 teachers, including the Division Chairs, the Principal and the Executive Administrator. This group works together to uphold the pedagogical ideals of the school and support the practical needs of teachers as a whole. Meeting bi-weekly through the school year, they:

- Guide teacher professional development and the acquisition of teaching resources.
- Discuss pedagogical issues and best practice.
- Refine and inform educational policies and procedures, including discipline, assessment, student supervision, and program structure and leadership opportunities.
- Develop ways to connect with alumni.
- Up to two Faculty Council members provide faculty representation at the WESE Board and are full voting members.

## Current Committee Structure *(in alphabetical order)*

### **Communication Committee** [communication@wese.ca](mailto:communication@wese.ca)

The Communication Committee activities include assisting with the WISE and WESE websites and co-ordinating the 'WISE Connections' monthly newsletter. We also update the WISE community calendar and committee calendars for WISE staff and WESE board members. If you love writing, editing, or all things techy, this may be the committee for you!

Opportunities for involvement include:

- Technical Support
- Graphic Design
- Yearly Calendar
- Monthly School Newsletter (including writing, collecting, and editing articles)

### **Community Outreach**

Community outreach at the WISE endeavours to connect with those in our geographical community and our parent body. We support the Open House, Fairs, and Gateways committees. We also initiate ways to contribute to our neighbours and the outlying community.

Our important subcommittees include:

#### **Fairs** [fairs@wese.ca](mailto:fairs@wese.ca)

The Fairs Committee organizes fun, meaningful community celebrations--including, but not limited to, Pumpkin Walk in October, Winter Fair in December, and Mayfair in the spring. Our biggest event is the Winter Fair, often described as our most magical gathering. The Winter Fair requires volunteer hours from all of our families to preserve the wonder of this event.

#### **Gateways** [gateways@wese.ca](mailto:gateways@wese.ca)

The Gateways Conference enhances the life of the community by bringing together inspiring Keynote speakers, talented workshop facilitators and those interested in Waldorf pedagogy. Our members secure noteworthy keynote speakers, plan appealing

workshops, and create a healthy and affordable menu. We aim to engage, educate, and empower our community and to outreach potential conference attendees.

Opportunities for involvement include:

- year-round on the General Committee
- Gateways Committee
- Fairs Committee/volunteering at Fairs
- Community Tea / Community events hosted at the WISE
- Open Houses

**Finance Committee** [treasurer@wese.ca](mailto:treasurer@wese.ca)

The Finance Committee manages the financials and spending budgets (including grants and casino funds) of the WESE and the WISE school. The finance committee:

- prepares financial reporting for Canada Revenue, Alberta Education, and the Alberta Game and Liquor Commission,
- files yearly tax and charitable returns
- facilitates the annual Audit process
- supports the work of the WISE financial officer and administration
- generates the annual budget for WESE board for approval
- provides financial forecasting to the WESE board

**Fundraising Committee** [fundraising@thewise.ca](mailto:fundraising@thewise.ca)

The Fundraising Committee seeks ways to raise funds to support the operation and initiatives of the WISE school and WESE organizations. Community-led fundraising is defined as Internal Fundraising, while major gift and grant fundraising fall under the Elevate WISE campaign. We have a variety of positions, big and small, independent and group work opportunities available. If you are passionate about the future of our school and want to be a part of this initiative and assist in reshaping how we fundraise, please connect with us.

Below is further information on essential subcommittees and other fundraisers already established at the WISE School:

**The Bulk Food Order** [bulkorders@wese.ca](mailto:bulkorders@wese.ca)

The Bulk Food Order is a volunteer-run service offered to the community to purchase quality goods at wholesale prices while also serving as an important fundraiser for the WISE school. Items are ordered online and picked up from the school on Fridays once a month, most months during the school year.

**Enchanted Garden Store** [store@thewise.ca](mailto:store@thewise.ca)

The Enchanted Garden Store provides an opportunity to purchase uniquely Waldorf toys, books, craft supplies, and other resource materials. We price inventory appropriately and keep it organized and clean. We order specially requested items for study groups and teachers. We also set up and run the store during school events such as Winter Fair, Candlelight Market, and Gateways Conference.

**Elevate WISE campaign,** [fundraising@thewise.ca](mailto:fundraising@thewise.ca)

Elevate WISE is our most significant fundraising campaign, geared toward the expanding needs of our school through capital campaign fundraising and funding to support programming at the WISE.

**Growth and Development Committee**

The Growth and Development Committee supports enrollment and awareness for WISE/WESE programming through education of current families and community outreach. Its goals are to support program enrollment and increase the exposure to WISE/WESE programming beyond the existing community. If this is a committee you would like to be involved with, please connect via [parentpartnership@wese.ca](mailto:parentpartnership@wese.ca)

As such, it:

- works closely with the Communications Committee for contributions and oversight of the WISE Facebook and Instagram posts
- works with WISE administration supporting open houses
- works with Parent Partnership creating and coordinating parent education opportunities at the WISE
- manages marketing and advertising
- identifies and participates in opportunities to promote the WISE at external events and venues
- looks at WISE exit surveys to identify potential obstacles for families

**Parent Partnership and Volunteer Committee** [parentpartnership@wese.ca](mailto:parentpartnership@wese.ca)  
[volunteer@thewise.ca](mailto:volunteer@thewise.ca)

The Parent Partnership Committee strives to be ambassadors of clarity and communication between all facets of the WISE school and WESE community, including WISE parents and staff and WESE board directors. We strive to nurture relationships between all members of our community to grow stronger as we use our resources in the most effective ways possible.

Our school relies heavily on the dedication of our volunteers, which allows us the freedom to provide Waldorf education with accessible tuition rates. To align with this mission, we do our best to identify volunteer opportunities throughout the year, relay those opportunities to our school families via our class reps, and spread the work amongst the whole community. If this work inspires you, please sign up and join our team.

Events include: Parent Orientation, Volunteer Appreciation events, Parent Gym Night, Weekly Parent Coffee in the gym

**Social Justice Committee** [julie.yerex@wese.ca](mailto:julie.yerex@wese.ca)

The Social Justice Committee strives to support a climate of inclusivity, accessibility, diversity and equity in the WISE community, while acknowledging that we live in a society rife with injustices. We seek to examine privileges as they exist in the context of the WISE, and work to enact positive change and a commitment that ensures an equitable education for all students while fostering a safe and welcoming diverse community for the betterment of all. As an interconnected community (board, faculty, administration, families, community and students), we acknowledge that our individual and collective actions, attitudes, and actions hold great power. We seek to maintain the school mission through conscious acknowledgement of the state of our current society, our roles both individually and as a school community, recognizing that we can do better, and actively seeking positive change. This committee is made up of staff, board, and community members.

Events: Monthly book study

## **Site Development Committee** [sitedevelopment@wese.ca](mailto:sitedevelopment@wese.ca)

The Site Development committee collaborates with the WISE school stakeholders to provide adequate space and facilities required by the school and its programs, involving coordinating the use of existing space and facilities, planning for future requirements, and developing new facilities. The committee works with the maintenance and garden/playground sub-committees and provides leadership and coordination support to these committees as required.

See further for information on our subcommittees:

### **The Garden**

The Garden sub-committee maintains the School's perennial and vegetable beds and constructs new ones determined by the teachers. In the future, we will look at including water capture and building a permaculture garden after the construction of the new building is finalized and usage of the grounds has been approved.

### **Maintenance**

Maintenance volunteers are willing to be called upon as required for minor school repairs and upkeep. A designated class maintenance coordinator has been very helpful in supporting classroom needs. Some people plan and lead work bees, and others work through a list provided by the committee and [info@thewise-administrative](mailto:info@thewise-administrative) assistant. Significant repairs are contracted externally.

### **Playground**

The Playground sub-committee supports the WISE in the research and development of an outdoor environment, playscape, and indoor physical opportunities with respect to the reflection of the whole child. We work with the WESE Board and Internal Health Committee to promote safe and stimulating indoor/outdoor environments and activities to meet the needs of various age groups. We work closely with the school grant writer to anticipate and plan future objectives. We also maintain the "play pod" (shed), incorporating the theory of loose parts and creating an environment rich in open-ended materials to engage the student's creativity, collaboration, self-direction, and inventiveness.

# VOLUNTEERING

[volunteer@thewise.ca](mailto:volunteer@thewise.ca)

Our school needs your assistance in the following ways:

- Committees – See Current Committee Structure (above)
- Carpentry – Work on your own, or be a part of one of our carpentry “workbee/build days.” Experience is an asset but not necessary.
- Handwork – Do you sew, knit, or felt? Our teachers would always welcome new toys for the classes.
- Classroom – Volunteers are needed weekly to help with knitting, be a class reader, attend nature walks, and other regular classroom activities, including nature walks. Parents are also welcome to help at lunch and during outside supervision.
- Outside Area – We will continue to maintain and further develop our playground/garden area.

## Class Representatives

Each year, each class has a Class Representative to work with the Class Teacher to organize and communicate with parents. The Class Representative coordinates volunteers to support class activities, oversees the emergency class contact list, and liaises with the Parent partnership/Volunteer coordinator(s).

The Class Representative agrees to attend committee meetings and is responsible for sharing volunteer communication with other class parents and encouraging volunteerism in the life of the school.

## Fundraising Opportunities

We are proud to be one of the most financially accessible Waldorf schools in North America. Please help us to keep our fees as low and accessible as possible by donating generously. Parents are expected to participate in school fundraising activities. Help by organizing a fundraiser on behalf of the WISE, sitting on the Fundraising Committee, or donating. All funds go directly to ensuring a quality education for your child.

Please participate in school fundraisers and share them with your friends and family, coworkers, and neighbours. We have several ongoing school fundraisers, including:

- [Mabel's Labels](#) – labels for clothing, shoes, and other items. Please enter Waldorf Independent School of Edmonton to Support a Fundraiser.
- Horizon Bulk Ordering – Save money, order quality organic dry goods in bulk. [bulkorders@wese.ca](mailto:bulkorders@wese.ca)
- Annual Spring Fundraising Event.
- Elevate WISE – Our ongoing campaigns to help raise funds for future development and current needs at the school. Become a monthly donor! [fundraising@thewise.ca](mailto:fundraising@thewise.ca)
- Aeroplan – Our teachers are trained throughout North America. Please consider donating Aeroplan miles throughout the year to help get them there.
- Do you work for a company with an Employee Donation Matching Program or a corporate sponsorship program? Please let us know if you can assist us in approaching them for a donation.

## COMMUNICATION

To ensure that you are kept up to date about school events, fundraisers, and activities, all WISE parents receive our “WISE Connection” newsletter/announcements and important details informing you of upcoming events directly from the WISE office.

In addition, you will receive regular Class-specific updates from your Class Teacher(s) and emails directly from our office staff about activities specific to your child’s class and the whole school.

Please ensure that we have the email addresses of each parent/guardian who needs to receive updates and information about your child’s progress.

Parents are welcome and encouraged to reach out anytime throughout the year to ask questions or share concerns or observations with their child’s teacher and administration as required.

## Parent Rights and Responsibilities

As a parent or guardian, you play a formative role in developing your child's sense of justice, equity, and worth. You also act as one of the most influential role models in your child's life. It is the expectation of the school that all adults model acceptable behaviour at all times within the school setting.

The WISE parent community is an essential element of our school's success. Strong, healthy relationships between the adult members of our community foster a social environment in which students learn to engage with others in a positive, constructive and respectful manner.

We believe these core values are a foundation in our relationships with others and inform the rights and responsibilities of our community, and how we communicate with others:

**RESPECT** for people and property,  
**RESPONSIBILITY** for what we say and do,  
**HONESTY** in all situations,  
**APPRECIATION** for the good in one another,  
**KINDNESS** to self and others, and  
**CELEBRATION** of diversity.

Community members' rights:

- To be treated with respect and courtesy by staff, students and parents/guardians.
- To be treated in a caring, polite and professional manner by staff.
- To be listened to and clearly communicated with, regarding your child's education.
- To have a timely response to concerns raised.
- To have their confidentiality respected by staff.

Community members' responsibilities:

- To treat staff, students and parents/guardians with respect and courtesy.
- To communicate respectfully with staff and community members.
- To hold all community members and students in the highest esteem.
- To protect the confidentiality of students and families.

## Communication and Conflict Resolution

Sometimes disagreements arise, and in these situations we want to help families effectively resolve conflicts - be it with WISE faculty, administration, WESE Board, and volunteers. We hope to address conflicts and solve problems positively and respectfully for all parties involved.

It is essential that there is transparent, open, and respectful communication between parents and WISE employees. Should a conflict arise between a parent and the WISE faculty / WESE employee, we encourage parents to address their concerns with that individual directly. If more support is needed, school administration can designate additional supports such as a second person to offer support in resolution.

When a WISE teacher/ WESE employee receives a complaint they will endeavour to address the problem directly with the parent. If for any reason the complaint can't be resolved, the employee shall direct the parent(s) to the Principal: [principal@thewise.ca](mailto:principal@thewise.ca), or Executive Administrator: [administrator@thewise.ca](mailto:administrator@thewise.ca), or call (780) 466-3312 to book an appointment. If the conflict or grievance is with the administrative leadership or a board member, a parent may take the issue/grievance to the WESE board president: [president@wese.ca](mailto:president@wese.ca) for resolution and support.

## Communication Guidelines

All the people within the community hold the collective health and welfare of our students, staff/ faculty, volunteers and families of the WISE. Because of this, complicated issues relating to children, education, our livelihoods, and our position will be held with the utmost care and conscious intention. Our collective intent is to communicate in the most effective manner possible, emphasizing solution-focused conversations and approaches.

### 1) Communication support/delegation

We will work collectively to ensure communications between each other are respectful and appropriate. Establishing and maintaining a respectful communication environment shall be seen as the primary step in the communication process. If there are challenges to establishing a safe and positive communication practice, we will reach out to others (Executive Administrator, Principal, or WESE President) to request additional communication support.

## **2) Establishing trust and building supportive relationships**

We support each other's well-being together to establish a mutually trusting and supportive relationship. The WISE teacher/staff member/volunteer cares for all the students and peers within the community, and is tasked with ensuring their safety and well-being, while simultaneously providing the children's formative education. Working together to build supporting and trusting relationships between WISE teacher/staff member/community member/volunteer is vital to supporting students.

## **3) Scheduled phone and in-person meetings are ideal**

Communication about sensitive matters shall be through scheduled phone and in-person meetings. Written communication will be reserved for small housekeeping details, or arranging a time to discuss more extensive issues.

## **4) Allowing for time and context**

We will allow reflective time to pass and context to develop before forming negative conclusions. If an incident occurs, we shall work collectively to determine what happened and resolve any challenges identified.

# **Communicating with your Child's Teacher**

## **By email**

The WISE recognizes that electronic mail (email) is a valuable communication tool. All staff members are provided with WISE email accounts to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of communication both within the organization and with the broader community. All parents are given the school-provided email addresses of their child's teachers. Teachers are advised to check their emails once a day (part-time teacher: on their working days at school and strive to respond within 24 hours). Email communication is well suited to short, housekeeping matters such as student attendance, class activities, curriculum assignments, deadlines, and special events.

## **In-person by appointment, or by phone**

If a conflict arises or sensitive or difficult situations and conversations need to be initiated, scheduled phone and in-person meetings are strongly recommended. Communication shall be through scheduled phone and in-person meetings. Written communication will be reserved for small housekeeping details, or arranging a time to discuss more extensive issues.

## Who to Talk to at The WISE

- If you have questions regarding your child, it is best to talk directly to the teacher. You may also make an appointment with the Executive Administrator: [administrator@thewise.ca](mailto:administrator@thewise.ca) or Principal: [principal@thewise.ca](mailto:principal@thewise.ca)
- Questions regarding the building, maintenance, or the grounds are addressed to: [info@thewise.ca](mailto:info@thewise.ca)
- Curriculum or discipline related questions go to the class teacher and the Principal: [principal@thewise.ca](mailto:principal@thewise.ca) or Executive Administrator: [administrator@thewise.ca](mailto:administrator@thewise.ca)
- Questions regarding health and safety inside or outside are directed to: [info@thewise.ca](mailto:info@thewise.ca)
- Questions regarding payment or enrolment go to the Registrar: [registrar@thewise.ca](mailto:registrar@thewise.ca) or [enrolment@thewise.ca](mailto:enrolment@thewise.ca)
- Can't find what you are looking for? Please let us know how to improve our Parent Handbook: [info@thewise.ca](mailto:info@thewise.ca) or [administrator@thewise.ca](mailto:administrator@thewise.ca)

# APPENDIX

## A. WISE Tiered Behaviour and Discipline Procedure

### **Tier 1 Behaviours and Strategies: Proactive Best Teaching Practice**

The teacher strives to implement positive classroom environments. When a child behaves in a disruptive manner that interferes with their own learning or the learning of others, Tier 1 (first steps) and teaching strategies may be applied by the teachers (*see chart below*), at their discretion, to meet the students to the best of their ability. These include best practices using signals and strategies that don't disrupt the flow of teaching.

### **Tier 2 Behaviours and Strategies: Managing Disruptive Behaviour**

When a child behaves in a manner that disrupts their learning, the learning of the class and/or the flow of teaching, the following Tier 2 steps and teaching strategies may be applied by teachers (*see chart below*). This will be done to balance the needs of the whole class with the individual student.

Teachers may begin anecdotal record-keeping for the purpose of monitoring trends in persistent behaviours. This may include Behaviour Report Forms, where communication with the family begins, and meetings with the teacher may be called with or without administrative support to identify student needs or skills deficits. This step may trigger the development of an IPP or Behaviour Support Plan for the purpose of developing strategies to support the student's learning.

### **Tier 3 Behaviours and Strategies: Behaviour Support Plan and/or Contract**

Parents will be informed when there are Level 3 behaviours and/or chronic disruptive behaviours that interfere with the student's learning and the learning of the whole class, or behaviours of a serious nature (*see appendix*).

If we are consistently applying Tier 2 and 3 strategies without success, then a parent meeting would be called with administrative support.

The teacher will use Behaviour Report Forms for transparency and communication. One copy of this form will be sent to the parents, and one will go into the student's file.

After three (3) formalized documentations, the parents/guardians will be expected to meet for a second time. During this second meeting, the parents and teachers will determine

expectations that, if not met within a specified and agreed upon time, will result in a suspension. The Faculty council may be consulted regarding all decisions made during this second meeting.

A Behaviour Support Plan and/or Contract may be developed to support the student. Tier 3 behaviours may result in suspension, and expulsion may be addressed.

### **Specialty Teachers**

Specialty teachers should confer with the class teacher to decide how best to outreach for faculty and/or family support when disruptive behaviours are persistent. The teachers may decide to come together in a meeting or separately.

### **Documentation – Behaviour Report**

After said parent meeting, behavioural documentation will be formalized. Parents and teachers will determine a timeline to review if strategies are working (and notice patterns).

## B. Tiered Behaviour Strategies

### Tier 1: Proactive Strategies for Supporting Positive Behaviour

#### School-Wide

- Ongoing Professional Development on Safe and Caring Schools Policy
- Normalize and celebrate diversity
- Provide referrals for community support services for mental health, family supports, psychoeducational assessments, etc. where needed

#### Classroom

- Have clearly outlined agenda and learning outcomes
- Carefully created seating arrangement and well-organized materials
- Calming class environment
- Teach self-regulation and social-emotional learning regularly
- Clearly structured routines for movement in the classroom shared with specialist teachers and subs
- Have students model routines and expected behaviours
- Carefully planned transitions – singing softly, gently singing directions (younger children), clearly established expectations beforehand
  - Include imagery wherever possible (snail homes, quiet as mice, eagle looking eyes)
- Greet students daily and when returning from recess with a handshake and check-in
- Well-established routines and procedures for specific activities (e.g. preparing and putting away materials, entering class, getting a drink)
- Provide tools for students to access to support self-regulation
  - E.g. Kindergarten kindness balls, wiggle chairs
- Pedagogical/Therapeutic storytelling for behaviours that are trending in the classroom (Susan Perrow)
- Where appropriate, provide timers and checklists in class as accountability reminders for students and employ universal design principles

#### Individual

- Develop positive relationships with students and parents
- Learn how individual students connect (e.g. eye contact, gentle touch on shoulder or back for younger children)
- Comment when students do well, make a good effort, and communicate these successes to parents
- Identify and model pro-social behaviours explicitly
- Ensure students are supported academically as individuals

### Tier 1 Strategies: Surface Behaviour Intervention

#### Student-Centred

Less disruptive to teaching to execute



#### Proactive Intervention Skills (use nonverbal interventions first)

- Change the pace of classroom activities
- Remove distracting objects
- Boost the interest of a student who shows signs of off-task behaviour
- Redirect the behaviour of off-task students
- Provide a 'Non-punitive' time out (e.g. engage in a purposeful task such as sending a message to the office, fetching materials, or invite students to sit/assist with the teacher to observe other students working on-task)
- Encourage the appropriate behaviour of other students
- Provide cues for expected behaviours
- Facilitate quick movement breaks

#### Remedial Intervention Skills/Non-Verbal Intervention

- Planned Ignoring
- Signal Interference
- Proximity (move closer to the student or move seating closer as needed)
- Interference Touch (e.g. lightly place a hand on the shoulder to regain attention)

#### Verbal Intervention Hierarchy (Student-Centred)

<p>More disruption to teaching to execute</p>	<p><b>Hints</b> - indirect means of letting the student know that his behaviour is inappropriate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Adjacent (peer) reinforcement</li> <li>● Calling student by name</li> <li>● Humour (not in the form of sarcasm)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tier 2 Strategies</b></p>	
<p><b>Teacher-Centred</b> (more disruption)</p>	<p><b>Verbal Intervention</b> (Increasingly teacher Centred)</p> <p><b>Questions</b> (in a considerate, respectful manner)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Questioning awareness of effect</li> <li>● Questioning cause of behaviour (antecedent to behaviour)</li> <li>● Call on the student to engage in the lesson</li> </ul> <p><b>Requests/Demands</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● “I messages”</li> <li>● Wheel of choice</li> <li>● Direct appeal</li> <li>● Positive phrasing</li> <li>● “Are not for”</li> <li>● Reminder of rules</li> <li>● Glasser’s triplets</li> <li>● Explicit redirection</li> <li>● Canter’s “broken record”</li> </ul> <p><b>Logical Consequences</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Choice statements</li> <li>● Consequence related to behaviour</li> <li>● Class meeting/restorative circle</li> </ul> <p>~~</p> <p>Teachers may also begin analyzing anecdotal notes of behaviours observed in class to determine antecedents, request other supports (such as a teacher observation or behaviour support resources, or communicate with other class teachers holding students in high esteem or holding a child study).</p> <p><b>If behaviours are recurrent and do not improve with best practice and Tier 1 or Tier 2 strategies and are continually disruptive to whole-class teaching and/or the individual's ability to learn, parents are contacted, and the situation is referred to Administration to determine the need of the creation of Individualized Support Plan and/or Behaviour Support Plan</b></p>
<p><b>Tier 3 Strategies</b></p> <p><b>The student may receive a Behaviour Support Plan</b></p> <p><b>*Note: Tier 3 strategies may be used to proactively support chronic Tier 1 or 2 behaviours</b></p>	
<p><b>Chronic Behaviour Problems</b></p>	<p>In the event it is identified that a student has engaged in Level III behaviour, families will be contacted about the behaviour, and administration will support developing the most appropriate pathway to support positive behaviour and ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students. A suspension may be issued.</p> <p><b>Functional Behavioural Assessment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The teacher attempts to determine the mistaken goal or motive underlying the misbehaviour.</li> <li>● Examine the circumstances surrounding positive and negative behaviours.</li> <li>● Once the goal is determined, the teacher creates a positive behaviour support plan to replace disruptive behaviour with appropriate behaviour.</li> </ul> <p><b>Behaviour Contracting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Teacher created in collaboration with student and/or family</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reward or learning-centred privileges</li> <li>• Focus on specific, gradual improvements, gradually increase the length of time and shift to more intrinsic rewards over time.</li> </ul> <p><b>Student Self-Monitoring</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use private; non-verbal agreed upon cues to remind the student</li> <li>• Usually best to focus on one behaviour at a time</li> </ul> <p><b>Anecdotal Record Keeping</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher records positive and negative behaviour over a period of weeks</li> <li>• Encourage student cooperation (conference, sign daily)</li> </ul>
<b>Admin</b>	<b>Suspension</b> <b>Expulsion</b>
<b>Levelled Behaviour</b>	
Some behaviour may fall under specific levels immediately based on the type and severity. The following serves as a guideline with due consideration to age and context.	
<b>Level 1</b>	<p>Behaviours are minor rule violations that teachers take measures to correct and may result in a possible consequence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Running in building/walkways • Disruptive behaviour • Unsafe/rough play • Disrespect • Littering • Unprepared for class • Profanity • Inappropriate displays of affection • Out of assigned area • Inappropriate clothing • Unexcused tardiness • Uncooperative/ defiant behaviour • Failure to follow classroom rules</li> </ul> <p><b>Level I Consequences</b></p> <p>Students who engage in Level I behaviour will be asked to identify the inappropriate behaviour and describe the appropriate replacement behaviour in a meeting with their teacher or aid. Younger students may fill out a “think sheet.” Every effort will be made to support positive behaviour; however, students may receive a mild consequence designed to discourage the inappropriate behaviour from occurring in the future. Consequences for Level I behaviour may include, but are not limited to:</p> <p>Verbal correction • Time out of class • Sent to office • Loss of privileges • Clean-up duty/service • Apology • In-class time out</p>
<b>Level 2</b>	<p><b>Level II Behaviour</b> is more serious in nature. It may result in an immediate verbal correction, a logical consequence, and/or a written agreement that is signed by a staff member, parent, and student where appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chronic Level I behaviour</li> </ul> <p><b>Level II Consequences</b></p> <p>The incident will be documented using anecdotal record-keeping, or if persistent Behavioural report forms are filled out, especially 3 reports of a similar nature.</p> <p>Consequences for Level II behaviours may include, but are not limited to:</p> <p>Verbal correction • Time-out • Loss of privileges • Clean-up duty • Apology • Behaviour contract • Extended school day • A request for a student to go home for the remainder of the day if the child is not able to self-regulate with support</p> <p>Teachers will keep anecdotal records for Level II consequences</p>
<b>Level 3</b>	<p><b>Level III Behaviour</b> may include: Serious fighting, harassment, and verbal abuse that violate the dignity, well-being, and safety of another person. These behaviours will not be tolerated and may result in suspension from school. Other Level III behaviours may result in suspension but may also be corrected using a variety of logical consequences or through collaborative work on an IPP or Behaviour Support plan.</p> <p>Chronic Level II behaviour • Uttering threats • Stealing • Smoking on school property • Fighting/assault/physical aggression • Vandalism/Damage to School Property • Possession of a weapon on school grounds • Intimidation/verbal threats • Harassment • Bullying • Verbal</p>

abuse/directed profanity • Disrespect toward others • Possession/under the influence of an illegal substance • Academic Dishonesty.

**Level III Consequences**

Students who engage in Level III behaviours will be **referred to the administration** for immediate corrective action. Teachers will fill out a Behaviour Report Form for all students exhibiting level III behaviours or reports from other students of these behaviours and notify the administration. Based on the report and behaviour, the administration may consult with the appropriate school personnel and/or contact the student's family. Once a necessary consultation has taken place, the administration will support the teacher and issue the appropriate consequences (based on a restorative justice model) and facilitate corrective action designed to help the student improve their school behaviour.

## C. Suspension

We suspend a student when:

- They are a threat to the safety of others and/or themselves. This includes defiance, threats, and consistent refusal to follow a teacher's directions.

### Suspension Guidelines:

- If a student exhibits any of the listed Tier 3 behaviours
- After three (3) formalized documentation of repeated Tier 2 behaviours, the parents/guardians will be expected to meet for a second time. During this second meeting, the parents and teachers will determine expectations that, if not met within a specified and agreed upon time, may result in a suspension.
- A Suspension Letter will be completed and sent home with the student. A second copy will go into the student's file. It will include the following information:
  - Letter from the support teacher/administration
  - Overview of behaviour
  - Strategies applied
  - Meetings held
  - Outcomes
- A Suspension strategy plan will be created that includes all suspension forms and shared agreements between parent/teacher/administration.
- Arrange a readmission meeting with the parents to talk about strategies for preventing further incidents. Students from Class 4+, may be required to attend a readmission meeting.

STUDENTS MAY NOT RETURN TO SCHOOL UNTIL A READMISSION MEETING HAS TAKEN PLACE

If more than three (3) suspensions have occurred, the faculty may decide that re-admission may be inadvisable in accordance with the School Act.