



Handbook

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## Introduction

The community of Newcastle Waldorf School is proud and pleased to welcome you and your family to our beautiful School. We wish you an enriching journey.

This handbook is a reference for families of the Newcastle Waldorf School. Its aim is to expand on the Prospectus and give information and guidance to parents about what they can expect from the School and also what the School expects of them.

When you sign the enrolment form you are signing to say that you have read, understood and have access to a copy of this handbook. A condition of initial and ongoing enrolment is support for the ethos of the School, which this handbook helps to clarify. Further clarification and any changes are distributed by notes and emails home as well as at class talks and parent/teacher meetings. Parents can also seek clarification at any time from teachers. Regular communication with the School is strongly encouraged.

## How and What We Teach

The College of Teachers works with Steiner's indications to realise his impulse in the changing circumstances of life and the world.

### *Learning Environment*

We aim to provide a warm, nurturing environment where individual students can learn. We do this by teaching values of respect, reverence, truth, goodness and creativity where students are encouraged to share in a vibrant learning community. We encourage goodwill and empathy. We collaboratively set expectations and teach students positive behaviours across the different environments and different times of the school day. Students are expected to strive to meet these expectations and follow requests made by School staff. We endeavour to teach these behaviours through positively acknowledging students. We also endeavour to individualise acknowledgement and consequences for students that are related to the situations and contexts in which the behaviours occur. By doing this we aim to build resilience in our students.

### *Literacy and Numeracy*

Literacy and Numeracy begins in Kindergarten with movement, song, dance, drawing, painting and craft. These activities build the foundations for reading and writing in later years. The children start to learn their written letters and numbers in a living, tangible and pictorial way from Class 1. The method of teaching works on the whole child and the results live within the child's being for life.

### *Music*

Music is an integral part of the school day from Kindergarten right through high school. As with other subjects, the experience comes before the theory. The children learn to sing, play, step and clap before they learn to read music. In early primary they learn as a group to play recorder and stringed instruments by ear under the guidance of the Class Teacher and they continue to sing every day as part of their morning circle.

Until the age of 9 or 10, music, like the other arts, is used to support the child's development. From around Class 4 onwards, it can be approached as an artform that increasingly requires its own attention. In year 5, then, students start to receive individual or small group lessons on an instrument chosen by the Class Teacher in consultation with parents. These lessons are taught weekly at School and they prepare the student for group ensembles and orchestras as well as giving them something to pursue individually for the next 6 or more years. Each student is expected to practise their instrument at home on a regular basis so that they are able to improve from lesson to lesson and bring something new to their groups at each rehearsal.

Musical and tonal experiences may be discussed in classes, but the teaching of theory and music notation only starts when the child is comfortable with the elementary techniques of their instrument. All students have their music lesson with a music teacher engaged by the School. If parents wish for their child to learn an instrument by another method, they should discuss this with the School to minimise conflicts in methodologies.

## *Eurythmy*

Eurythmy is a dance-like artform which involves the expression of sound through movement. Specific movements correspond to particular notes, intervals, consonants or vowel sounds. At a surface level eurythmy enhances coordination, strengthens the ability to listen and assists with the development of language and music, but at a much deeper level students develop an awareness of social dynamics. Eurythmy draws the students into conscious movement, which enables them to awaken within their bodies, from their fingertips to their toes. This leads to an unfolding of a sense of self which may lead to a knowledge of themselves and a respect for the space around them. Eurythmy is practised in a variety of contexts from kindergarten to high school.

## *Technology*

The School works closely with the indications of Rudolf Steiner in all aspects of the curriculum. Digital Technologies is no exception to this, but it is, perhaps, the area that has seen the most rapid change since Steiner's time, and this presents us with both opportunity as well as cause for careful consideration.

Digital technologies have been with us for less than one human lifetime which is surely some reason for us to remain, at the very least, as yet unconvinced about their effect on the human being. It is probably safe to say that there are both great positives and negatives here, and the College of Teachers uses its best judgement to offer the students, through staged development, what we believe to be appropriate in this time and place and in preparation for their futures.

Steiner Education Australia has released a digital technologies curriculum which, in conjunction with the NSW Syllabus, provides the School with material from which to draw. SEA's Stuart Rushton, developer of the SEA technologies curriculum, uses "analogue to digital" as an overarching idea for the technology curriculum from Kindergarten to Year 10, based on its historical evolution:

*"Technology has evolved over the ages through the necessity of finding creative solutions to address needs arising from human activity and endeavour.*

*Students' creative capacities and will-based intelligence thrive when they use their hands. The intricate fine motor skills that enable them to create are hard-won. It takes time and effort to become an artisan such as a knitter, painter, carver or calligrapher.*

*The Steiner Design and Technologies Curriculum enables students to develop fundamental, practical skills as an artisan before they use complex technologies."*

It is this natural progression aligned with the child's stages of development that guides us in our own approach to technology.

Through primary school and high school, you will see the children actively engaged in working creatively with their hands in all areas of their education. They begin with no tools, then very simple tools and progress through to using advanced technology. They make things and solve problems appropriate to their stage of development. In our School, digital technologies are introduced in high school when they learn about the computer as a very sophisticated tool. Calculators are used for the first time in Year 9 Mathematics; audio-visual footage is rarely shown to students younger than Class 7. Over the course of their high school education, students will increasingly be exposed to and utilise more and more complex technologies, allowing them to grow to be informed and competent users of (rather than potentially slaves to) digital technologies.

As more and more new technologies become available to us, the School will introduce these, where possible, at appropriate places in the curriculum and the child's development.

In recent years students have been increasingly interested in extra-curricula STEM opportunities and they have shown great ability in problem solving in school-based and external activities. Again, the School will participate in these initiatives in a stage-appropriate way, allowing students' use of technology to progress over time.

In Classes 11 and 12, through their individual projects we see great scope for students to pursue their interests in digital technologies to a highly sophisticated level, using up-to-date school equipment and specialist equipment.

We live in an exciting and daunting age when it comes to innovation and the power of human thought. Our endeavour as a School is to allow students to grow in a way that equips them in all of their faculties, to meet this age.

### *Camps and Excursions*

Day excursions are part of the cycle of events at the School and are viewed as an essential part of every child's education. Excursions usually involve walking in and exploring the National Parks, State Forests and coastal areas within an hour's drive of the School. There are also more specific excursions to places relevant to each subject such as wetlands or culturally and historically significant sites. Parents are notified of all excursions prior to the day, but signing the enrolment contract includes granting permission for students to attend all excursions.

Excursions usually require students to wear clothing and footwear that is sturdy and suitable for outdoor activities. This includes sun protection appropriate to the season and conditions. Students also need backpacks to carry their lunch and at least 1 litre of water (more in summer). As per the School's dress code, students wear broad-brimmed hats (no caps) as appropriate sun protection.

Parents receive notes about overnight and multi-night camps and special excursions well in advance and they are required to give permission, and in the case of excursions involving a third party provider, or major HS camps, make a contribution to the cost of the trip. The focus of overnight camps is working together as a community in all aspects of the activity. Notes home will specify items that students need to bring (and not bring) to enhance this sense of community. Camps are also part of the School curriculum and all students are required to attend.

### *Wellbeing and Learning Support*

Pastoral care offered to students of the School is facilitated by the system of Class Teacher and Class Guardian and access to specialist support services, such as an affiliated counsellor and the Association of Independent Schools NSW.

### *Wellbeing In Our Community*

Our community strives to find harmony in our interactions and communication to foster healthy relationships. We look to the gifts of each member of the community and through these we collaborate. The Newcastle Waldorf School welcomes students, parents, carers, staff and visitors from all races, religions, cultural backgrounds, levels of ability and neurodiversity. We welcome people of all genders and sexualities, and we model and teach inclusivity in age-appropriate ways across the school. We highly value the richness that comes from diversity and the opportunities for learning and understanding that diversity brings to us. Above all, we strive to create a loving space that allows each and every child to grow and flourish unimpeded by discrimination of any kind. We make adjustments to be inclusive while respecting the privacy of the

individual, fostering a safe environment where each individual has the opportunity to learn and grow towards their potential.

### *Visitors*

The School often enjoys visitors from the community sharing their expertise with the students. Where a non-teaching staff member is scheduled to deliver approved curriculum content about a sensitive topic, parents will be formally notified by the School.

## **What We Encourage and Expect**

Newcastle Waldorf School believes that it is important that the School and families uphold common values so that the child may flourish in consistent and protected environments. It is well known that the link between School and home is vital, and that heartfelt parent support and interest leads to a more interested and involved student. The School expects parents to consciously be appraising what their child is exposed to, thus embarking on a journey of discovery. Parenting is a creative process which requires imagination and involves struggle. Of course, there is an ideology underpinning what we do at School, but this is in no way a creed or rigid set of rules. Steiner himself prescribed nothing at all, but encouraged people to think for themselves in their own place and time.

The School hosts regular talks from teachers and visiting professionals on Waldorf education principles, and teachers are always willing to find time to discuss any questions you might have. We can also suggest a range of literature, depending on your interest.

### *Nourishment*

Small children are, as it were, a total sense organ: a child's reaction to the world around them is made through their nervous system. The child learns through this means, and more intensely than an adult. It is important that the experiences we expose our young children to are of the most noble and beautiful in nature. The colours that they see and absorb into their inner eye should ideally be the pure colours of the rainbow and the natural world. The perfumes should be those continuously created in the natural world, from the salty sea spray through to the nectar of the honeysuckle and the zest of the lemon. Likewise, with the sense of touch they should be allowed unconsciously to experience all the variety that nature offers in the tactile world from the grain of sand to the clump of moss.

It is important that the child first experiences the natural tastes made freely available by nature for as long as possible, both to enhance physical development, and to make a connection with the environment. The School is very conscious of providing an environment where this is possible and asks for parent support in packing healthy lunches for children made up of food that is, wherever possible, un-processed and not pre-packaged.

We are also conscious of the impact we have on the natural world through the waste we create. For this reason the school requires students to not bring any food packaging to school. We only have food-scrap bins around the lunch tables and these go to the compost or to the chickens daily. All food packaging should be left at home and lunches should come to school in reusable containers or wraps. Bins in classrooms are used for waste from the school resources which is recycled where possible.

## *Electronics, Screens and the Imitative Child*

The effect of electronic devices, social media, television, computer games and mobile phones on the child's nervous system and the deprivation to their sensory organs that results is in direct conflict with Steiner's educational principles. The negative effects of electronic devices are often clearly observed in the kindergarten and primary school.

We ask parents to provide an environment that allows the child to interact with the natural world, rather than the electronic one and to observe how instinctively the child will imitate nature and the adults close by. It is important to encourage these aspects of imitation, which are beautiful, purposeful and worthwhile. We can cultivate sensitivity and beauty in a child by smelling the flowers, gazing with wonder at the moon and stars, listening to bird calls, touching the moss, feeling the worn stones, tasting the sweet juices and saps of the fruit and flowers and balancing on the low edges. Your child not only imitates your outward actions but also your inner state of being. This imitative state is what the School strives to foster within the small child: by imitating actions and intentions that are worthwhile and are completed processes, the child will develop the ability to think properly and to follow through.

In the upper primary and high school parents need to carefully consider the impacts of social media use and the need for consistent monitoring. Negative effects such as anxiety and depression are growing issues for teenagers. Parents need to be well aware of the permanent nature of various types of media "posts" that their children make, and the need to always be positive and respectful to others in their social media use. While the school covers cyber safety as a PDHPE topic, and through parent meetings, it is expected that parents will take all due responsibility to ensure the safety of their own child as well as the safety of those with whom their child is interacting. We don't advise that primary-age students have a phone or access to electronic devices at all and that parents make informed decisions about providing their children with these things even in the high school.

Students are not permitted to bring phones or other electronic devices to School. If there is a particular reason for carrying such items, students are required to turn them off and hand them in at the office before school. They can be collected at the end of the school day. Students are responsible for their personal belongings and the School accepts no responsibility for any loss or damage incurred to these belongings.

Students found in possession of electronic devices at School or on School excursions and camps will have the device confiscated and further disciplinary action may be taken. It will be returned to the student or their parent/guardian only at the parent/guardian's request.

Year 11 and 12 students who bring laptops to school will comply with the School's BYOD policy.

## *Dress Code*

While Newcastle Waldorf School does not have a uniform, the students are encouraged to wear clothes that are appropriate for the full range of school activities. The School provides an environment where children have the possibility to develop individual personal qualities rather than conditioned stereotyped images of themselves.

In the high school, students are encouraged to dress in a manner that sets an example to the younger children. Parents are required to oversee their child's clothing to ensure that there is adequate covering for the shoulders, chest, midriff and upper legs. Parents are responsible for providing suitable sun protection, particularly for excursions. Caps are not considered suitable as they don't protect the neck as well as a wide-brimmed hat. Open shoes (but not thongs) or bare feet may be worn at a variety of times through the day, but all students must bring a pair of covered shoes each day. Teachers will contact parents if they feel that a student's attire is impacting negatively on their or others' ability to learn within the School community.

Broad brimmed hats are required for outside activities in terms 1 and 4.

Dress code:

- Covered shoulders, chests and midriffs.
- Adequate leg covering that allows for participation in a variety of physical activities.
- Broad-brimmed hats (no caps).
- Covered shoes must be brought to school each day (no thongs).
- Clothing in a range of natural colours with no large brand names, slogans or offensive or distracting imagery.
- **High school:** No makeup or nail polish and only one piece of jewellery that is safe in any given situation.
- **Primary school:** No makeup, nail polish or jewellery.

Class Teachers/Guardians are happy to discuss clothing at any time.

### *Homework*

Teachers do not give homework to students in Kindergarten or early primary, but students in the upper primary will occasionally be given some aspect of the day's work to complete at home. These are usually tasks such as finishing a drawing, learning a poem or a part for a play or making a diary entry or a drawing of the weather at sunset.

In the high school homework increasingly becomes part of the rhythm of learning. Teachers give homework to consolidate that part of the day's learning which needs strengthening. The aim is to give the children something to work over before they go to sleep so that the unconscious mind has some nourishment to digest during the hours of physical rest.

To best support the education of the child, families of high school students should make sure that they set aside ample time every afternoon or evening to allow students to complete their homework without pressure. Students also need time to practise their individual musical instrument. Parents can help children to develop a truer connection with their work in this way, rather than that developed when work is rushed in the morning, on the bus or in school breaks. Producing the work just to have fulfilled the requirements is of little value both immediately and in the long term. Developing strong connections with work nourishes the growing human being.

### *Musical Instruments*

All high school students are required to bring their instruments on Tuesday and Wednesday every week for orchestra and small ensembles. They will also have one three-week block each term where they will most likely need their instrument Monday – Thursday as well. Each student will also have an individual lesson one day per week. The expectation is that students take their instrument home each afternoon and on the weekend to practise for their classes, their lessons and their groups. This expectation continues all through high school.

### *Equipment*

Primary aged students have all of their stationery supplied by the school. High school students, however, are required to provide their own and must always have the following:

- Both lead and coloured pencils, pens, pacers.
- Compass and protractor, ruler and setsquare.
- Sharpener and eraser.
- A USB stick (once they start using computers).

There is a policy regarding year 11 and 12 students bringing their own laptop. All other electronic devices are handed in at the office on arrival at school. Students should bring only equipment that is necessary for their lessons. Toys and other distractions should be left at home

## Communication, Contributions and Code of Conduct

### *Notes and Newsletters*

Families receive notes and newsletters on a regular basis which advise of upcoming events and dates. Notes are mostly sent to parents by email, so it is important to keep your contact details up to date. If you are not receiving emailed correspondence from the School, please let the office know so that we can confirm that you are part of the mailing list. Often our emails go into your "promotions" or "junk" mail folders, so please check these first.

### *Parent/Teacher Meetings*

Parent/teacher meetings are not only an important way for parents and teachers to get to know each other, but also to discuss their child's progress in all aspects of their education. Parents should make an interview time with their child's Class Teacher/Guardian at least twice a year to view, discuss and sign reports. The Class Teacher or parent may also request a meeting to discuss a specific issue or situation at any other time through the year. Teachers make every effort to be available for these meetings as they find they are the best times to listen to parents and have in-depth conversations about the individual child.

### *Talks and Workshops*

#### **Class Talks**

Class talks are held regularly and are always relevant to a child's age and stage of development. The talks refer to Steiner's philosophy regarding the needs of the developing child as well as things specific to the class itself. Parents should attend these talks as often as possible. There is always an opportunity to ask questions or raise concerns.

#### **General Talks/Meetings**

The College of Teachers or a request from the parents may instigate a General Talk. Past talks have included; gardening, the seasons, storytelling, more general Steiner philosophy, the senses and other topics.

#### **Parent Workshops**

Parent workshops are held from time to time with a view to introducing a variety of cultural insights and inspiration to parents so that they may integrate these into family life.

There is a parent choir that rehearses under the guidance of a teacher on a weekly basis.

### *Parent and Teacher Circle*

We started this initiative in mid 2018 as another way of bringing teachers and parents/guardians together in a forum where a whole range of topics can be discussed. We hope that it can evolve to be largely driven by parents and what they feel they can bring to the School. We include teachers in the meetings to provide immediate feedback to the many questions that can arise and to help guide discussions from a Waldorf perspective. We meet in Week 3 of each term, Tuesday or Wednesday, alternating between afternoon and evening. You will be notified each term of the meeting time and date.

We invite questions and suggestions for agenda items to be emailed to: [parentcircle@newcastlewaldorfschool.nsw.edu.au](mailto:parentcircle@newcastlewaldorfschool.nsw.edu.au) as early as possible.

### *Communication Advice for Parents/Guardians:*

- It is definitely appropriate for you to catch a teacher at the gate after school. They will let you know if they have other things scheduled.
- Unless you have made a time, teachers appreciate only quick notifications before school. They are usually getting ready for morning lesson, and this is not the time to raise issues that are not of immediate relevance to the morning lesson.
- You may email a teacher at: *teacher'sfirstname@newcastlewaldorfschool.nsw.edu.au*
- Generally, your child's class teacher/guardian should be your first port of call for most things. In high school, subject teachers are always happy to speak to you regarding subject specific questions.
- If you have a concern or complaint, please refer to our grievances policy in the School downloads section of the website. Generally speaking, we find most successful resolutions come through raising concerns with us before they grow too much. Ideally this happens between parents and class teachers/guardians but it can involve leadership as well if required.

### *Attendance/Illness*

The school encourages parents to consider the healthy benefits of rhythm within the school day, the week and the term. There is a direct correlation between healthy physicality, the organs and nervous systems and a life where rhythm holds sway. The school believes that it is important that the students experience the rhythm of the day, the unit of work, and the term; from the beginning until it is put to rest. Staying home is obviously advisable for serious illnesses, however, if a child is suffering tiredness, a light injury or mild illness the school prefers the weekly rhythm to remain uninterrupted. If parents feel unsure as to whether it is or is not appropriate to send a child to School, they should consult with the Class Teacher or Guardian.

We encourage children to be at School up to half an hour before commencement of class in order to settle in and play with their friends. You are requested to pick up your children immediately after school. If you are delayed by more than 20 minutes, please inform the School by phone so that we can provide the appropriate care for your child.

To ensure that both the School and parents know where students are meant to be on any given school day please note the following:

- You MUST notify the office of absences BEFORE 9:45am through the Sentral parent portal or on the Sentral for Parents App.
- The rolls will be taken in the morning lesson and any student absence that has not been explained by this time will be noted as such in the roll.
- We will always notify parents/guardians, where possible if a child is absent unexplained during morning lesson. The notification will be by email for the sake of office efficiency.

Parents must inform the School in writing of any new circumstances that will affect their child's participation in any aspect of their school life. This information must include a time frame for recommencing participation in all activities.

### *Holidays*

School holidays are set before the commencement of the new school year and there is always at least one week of holidays that does not coincide with the state-wide school holidays. The School decided to provide this week for families who like to avoid the high prices and crowds of the regular holidays. The school expects that families will utilise this week rather than take students out of school during term. The last day of term always has important concerts and special activities for all students. Holidays in term time must be marked in our rolls as "absent unjustified" to comply with NSW legislation. For extended cultural experiences there is provision for

exemption from school with certain conditions. Please contact the school well in advance to fill in the appropriate forms and make arrangements with teachers about school work requirements during that time.

The School observes all public holidays that fall in term time.

## *Grading and Reporting*

### **Primary**

All primary assessment is conducted discreetly and is integrated in the learning activities. Teachers avoid competition and comparison between students by not giving marks. Feedback is given individually so that each student's focus is on doing their best for the teacher, themselves and out of respect and interest in the subject and a joy of learning.

### **Secondary**

In high school, assessment activities become more explicit. While they are often integral to the learning activities, students become increasingly aware of their teacher's expectations in assessment tasks. If students receive marks it is primarily to highlight areas of strength and those that need improvement. Teachers generally prefer to give verbal and written feedback to promote learning rather than competition.

### **Generally**

Class and subject teachers keep assessment data for each student. This data is compiled in half-yearly and yearly reports that are made available to parents by way of an interview with the Class Teacher. Parents should organise to talk with their child's Class Teacher or Class Guardian at least twice each year to discuss their child's report and progress. Copies of reports are provided to parents.

## *Dietary Requirements and Medication*

Please contact your child's Class Teacher or Guardian if your child requires, or may require, **medication of any type** while at school (this includes paracetamol or other over-the-counter medication as well as alternative medicines).

- It is important that the School is able to oversee the use of all medication by students, so the Class Teacher/Guardian will discuss with you:
  - Having a written plan
  - Storing the medication at school or in the student's bag
  - Whether the student is able to self-administer, and, if so, how they:
    - are supervised while self-administering, or
    - notify the Class Teacher/Guardian when they have self-administered, and
    - are made aware that they are not to share their medication with other students.

If your child has **asthma or anaphylaxis** it is very important that you provide the School with a health care plan. You need to also provide the school with any medication associated with these conditions and make sure it is kept within its expiry date. In addition to the above, on excursion days please send a copy of this plan, and also the required medication, in your child's bag.

If your child's dietary requirements have changed, or you would like to check that we have them correct in our student information, please contact the office to clarify this.

Kindergarten teachers have offered to use natural creams and homeopathic remedies for Kindergarten students, but they will only do so with your permission. Please let the Kindergarten teachers know if you are happy with this arrangement.

## *First Aid and Emergencies*

All teachers are trained in providing first aid, and our policy is that:

- Any qualified staff member may administer first aid in accordance with their training.
- Parents will be consulted, where possible, if their child needs urgent attention, but the school reserves the right to take all necessary steps to provide first aid in an emergency situation in accordance with their training.
- If an ambulance is required in an emergency situation, the parents will be liable for the cost. If you don't have private health cover, ambulance only cover is relatively inexpensive.

First aid guidelines recommend against giving any medication to students unless it is part of saving a life. Teachers will not give painkillers, for example, to students without parental permission. Staff are trained in administering asthma and anaphylaxis medication, and they will do so in a life-threatening situation.

## *Immunisations*

The Newcastle Waldorf School is not part of the school vaccination program offered by the state government. Please refer to <http://www.immunisation.health.nsw.gov.au/#anchor-when> or make your GP or other health care provider your point of contact for information about vaccinations and the immunisation schedule. The state government schools program offers vaccinations to year 7 students and students in years 11 & 12 in participating schools.

It is a requirement of all schools to request each child's immunisation history so that in the event of an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease we would know who to exclude from School. Records can be given to the School office if you need to update your child's immunisation history or if you haven't already provided it on enrolment.

## *Working Bees and Other Contributions to the School*

There are at least four working bees each year that you can attend. For each term where you contribute to a working bee an amount of \$30 will be credited to your account. Alternatively, or in addition, you can join one of the parent working groups. Each group has a contact teacher and this teacher has the responsibility of liaising with the College of Teachers who make the final decisions about the activities of each group.

There are a variety of groups and they change from time to time. They may include:

- Indigenous Cultural group
- New Parents welcoming
- Lost property collection
- Gardening
- Repairs and maintenance
- Bee keeping
- Sustainability Group

## *Code of Conduct for Parents, Guardians, Carers and Visitors*

Newcastle Waldorf School is committed to creating an environment which is safe, respectful and mutually supportive for students, staff, volunteers, parents and guardians.

The Parent, Carer and Visitor Code of Conduct has been designed to guide them in their dealings with staff, other parents, students and the wider School community to promote positive interactions.

The [Parent, Carer and Visitor Code of Conduct](#) is available in the School Downloads on the School website.

If the Co-Principals or the Board of Directors believe that a mutually beneficial relationship of trust and cooperation between a parent and the School has broken down to the extent that it adversely impacts on that relationship, then the School, the Co-Principals or the Board may require the parent to remove the child from the School. No remission of fees will apply.

## Miscellaneous

### *Birthday Parties*

Birthday invites can be the source of great excitement in the younger years. It can be difficult, though, when some children are invited and others not. We suggest inviting the whole class or just one or two close friends. Invites should be shared parent to parent as close to the date as practicable. Teachers are also happy to distribute invitations if they are for the whole class.

### *Bus passes*

Bus pass applications are completed online by parents/guardians, and are only necessary when students:

- Are changing school
- Are changing home address
- Have received an expiry notification

Students in rural/regional areas will automatically receive a new school travel pass at the start of the new school year. Students in the Opal network will be able to continue to use their existing Opal card for school travel until they receive a new card each year.

If you are new to the School, need to reapply or need more information, please see:

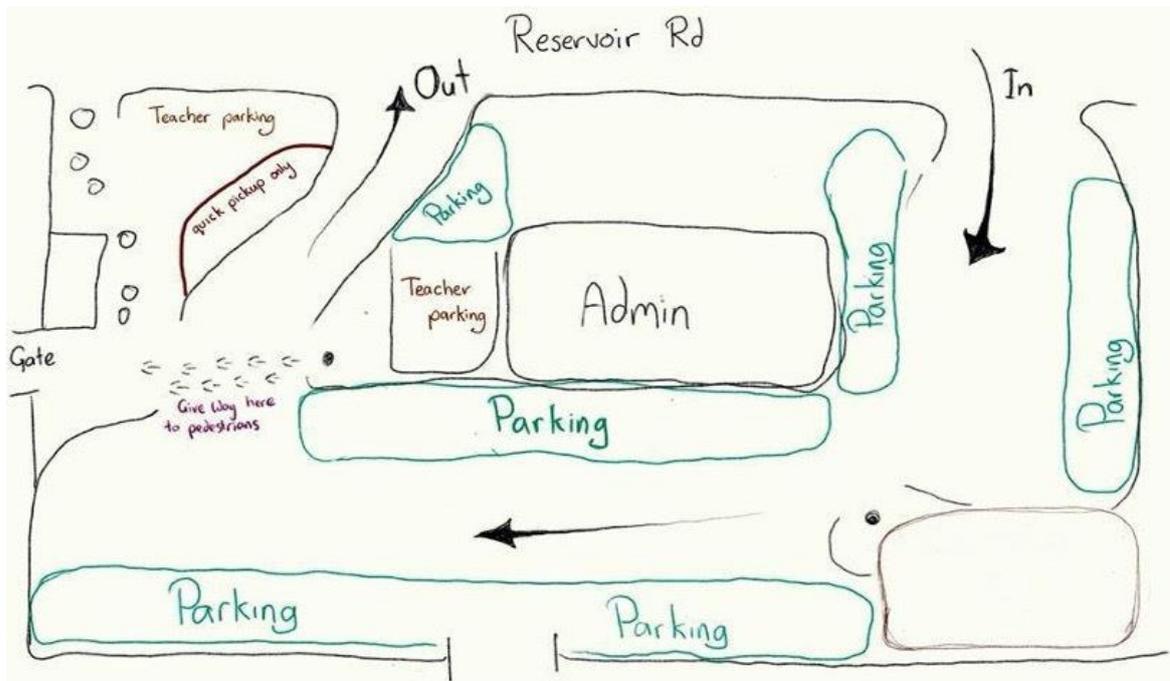
<https://apps.transport.nsw.gov.au/ssts/#/>

### *Car Park*

To ensure the safety of children in the car park please note the following:

- Observe the 10 km/h "shared zone" speed limit in the car park (5 km/h is even better).
- Rear to kerb parking in all car spaces.
- In the interests of child safety, minimise lingering outside the gate with your children. For impromptu talks with teachers or other parents, please come inside the gate and make sure your children are also inside the gate.
- If you are parked in the car park, please come to the gate to collect your young children rather than waiting for them in your car. No Primary students should be in the car park without their parent/guardian.
- If you are willing and able, it alleviates congestion and frees up space (for those who are less mobile or have very small children with them) if you park on the street or on our other properties. Both sides of the street are appropriate for this and the crossing attendant can escort children across the road.
- We are very open to making individual arrangements for those who regularly find the parking difficult for whatever reason. Please contact us.
- We have a "quick pick up area" on part of the gravel near the gate. For this to work we need parents to:
  - Only stop here when your child is waiting at the gate. Keep driving through the car park if your child is not ready and waiting.
  - Stop here in a way that allows for pulling out rather than reversing back over the crossing.
  - Remind your children to enter the car on the passenger side.
  - If both spaces are occupied, be prepared to continue through and find other parking. We cannot have a queue through the carpark.
- Please respect neighbours' driveways, parking signs on the road and general road rules (such as no u-turns across unbroken lines)
- Please turn off the engine of your car when you are parked in the car park. This is a safety issue as well as a health issue for anyone near the car park. Exhaust fumes tend to drift either into the play areas and D&T, the gate area or the office, depending on the wind direction.

- If you are on foot, please use the big timber gates or adjacent entrance rather than the car access gates from the road.
- If you are staying to talk to a teacher or another parent or to just spend some time with your children around the School in the afternoon, you are responsible for the safety of your children at all times. Please help them, especially the little ones, to play inside the School grounds rather than in the car park or your car.
- The parking space adjacent to the fence at the NE end of the car park (bottom left of this diagram) should be kept clear for the less mobile and those parents with students whose needs require them to be closer to the gate.



## Policies

All School policies can be accessed in the School office. Many policies are on the School's website, currently at:

<http://www.newcastlewaldorfschool.nsw.edu.au/school-downloads1.html>

Policies are developed in consultation with the New South Wales Education Standards Authority, The Association for Independent Schools and Steiner Education Australia.

Excerpts from a few key policies are provided below:

### *Supporting Positive Student Behaviour and Discipline*

Newcastle Waldorf School aims to provide a warm, nurturing environment where individual students can learn.

We aim to do this by teaching values of respect, reverence, truth, goodness and creativity where students are encouraged to share in a vibrant learning community.

We encourage goodwill and empathy. We collaboratively set expectations and teach students positive behaviours across the different environments and different times of the school day. Students are expected to strive to meet these expectations and follow requests made by School staff.

We endeavour to teach these behaviours through positively acknowledging students. We also endeavour to individualise acknowledgement and consequences for students that are related to the situations and contexts in which the behaviours occur. By doing this we aim to build resilience in our students.

The School prohibits the use of corporal punishment in disciplining students attending the school.

The School does not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons, including parents, for any reason, at the School.

For serious breaches of expectations, it may be necessary to suspend or expel a student.

(full policy available on the website)

## *Bullying*

The School recognises the importance of responding appropriately to bullying. All students have the right to be treated fairly and with dignity in an environment free from disruption, intimidation, harassment, victimisation and discrimination.

All members of the School community contribute to preventing bullying by modelling and promoting appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships. The School responds to bullying by following the strategies outlined in this policy.

### **Definition:**

*Bullying is an ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power over one or more persons. Bullying can happen in person or online, and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert).*

*Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.*

*Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.<sup>1</sup>*

The School recognises the seriousness of bullying within any school community and the devastating effect that it can have on the individual in particular. The College of Teachers is committed to effectively resolving incidents of bullying, where it stands within its power to do so.

## *Complaints and Allegations*

A complaint may be defined as an assertion made against a specific staff member or the School or any member of the School community that **does not** involve a serious breach<sup>2</sup> of legislation or policy.

Newcastle Waldorf School acknowledges that misunderstandings, concerns or conflict may arise from time to time within the School community. In the first instance, it is best to discuss concerns with the teacher involved, next the Class Teacher or finally the Co-Principals. If the issue is not resolved, or is not appropriate for discussion informally, we encourage parents to raise the concern by using the 'Complaints Procedure' as detailed in the School's Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures. The policy can be accessed in the School office or on the School website.

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<sup>1</sup> Definition from the National Centre Against Bullying

<sup>2</sup> 'Serious Breach' is defined as of a nature which, if proven, would have a reasonable prospect of leading to criminal or disciplinary action.

An allegation may be defined as an assertion made against a specific staff member, contractor, volunteer or any other persons associated with the care and protection of a child or young person that **involves a serious breach** of legislation that may place that child or young person at risk of harm.

In addition to providing a caring and creative educational environment, Newcastle Waldorf School is also committed to the protection of children from physical abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, child sexual abuse and domestic violence. All staff members are aware that the 'Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998' requires MANDATORY reporting of a child or young person at 'risk of significant harm'. All staff are also familiar with their requirements as outlined in the Newcastle Waldorf School's Child Protection Policy.

A person wishing to make an allegation should use the 'Allegations Procedure' as detailed in the School's Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures. The policy can be accessed in the School office or on the School website.

## Contact Information

Newcastle Waldorf School  
30 – 36 Reservoir Road  
Glendale NSW 2285

Individual contact details for staff members can be found in the January email to all parents/guardians

Phone: (02) 4954 4853

Email: [office@newcastlewaldorfschool.nsw.edu.au](mailto:office@newcastlewaldorfschool.nsw.edu.au)

Account Enquiries: [accounts@newcastlewaldorfschool.nsw.edu.au](mailto:accounts@newcastlewaldorfschool.nsw.edu.au)

Admission Enquiries: [admissions@newcastlewaldorfschool.nsw.edu.au](mailto:admissions@newcastlewaldorfschool.nsw.edu.au)

Website: [www.newcastlewaldorfschool.nsw.edu.au](http://www.newcastlewaldorfschool.nsw.edu.au)