

Red River Waldorf Parents' Handbook

Red River is affiliated with the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship and is Ofsted registered. We comprise an Early Years Provision for a lower Kindergarten age, an Upper Kindergarten for children three to six years old, and Waldorf curriculum classes and other sessions for children from seven to sixteen years.

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Red River Structure

Red River Kindergarten and Red River Waldorf are two separate provisions that underpin a Steiner Waldorf inspired learning and community environment for children aged 3-16 years, and their families.

Red River Kindergarten manager and sole proprietor - Louise Batters

Red River Waldorf founder and chair of the board of teachers - Adeline Ayers

Red River has developed from an Ofsted registered home education project. Red River Waldorf is currently registering as a small independent Steiner school and charitable incorporated organization.

Key aspects of our curriculum are social, creative and practical.

We seek to draw out innate wisdom as a basis for knowledge and potential. It is our aim to encourage the evolution of creative consciousness sponsored by love, recognizing the need for a new attitude towards human development and inspiring others through community.

A key principle is to model and develop a loving, responsible attitude to self, others and environment.

We believe education can be a major facilitator of positive and individual social change. Our goal is to share with family and community the education of our children.

Red River Community

The Red River Community supports and enriches the aims and principles of both provisions. It is a registered charitable organization run by committee members and volunteers and incorporates the festivals of the Waldorf curriculum.

Board of Teachers

Larches class teacher -

Chestnuts class teacher -

Willows class teacher -

Sycamores class teacher -

Beeches class teacher -

Social and emotional development Co-ordinator -

Maths Co-ordinator -

English Co-ordinator -

Singing-

Languages -

Pottery -

Class assistant -

Parent Volunteer -

Karenza Grant

Ruth Lovegrove

Josie Stone-Taylor

Adeline Ayers

Bevan Davis

Amanda Murdoch

Ginny Daley

Jenny Hocking

Gail Hampshire

Emilie Champlaud

Vicky Boehm

Aga Neilowski

Nikki Jose

Rachel Henson

What Your Child Will Need

Your child will be provided with a peg and their belongings can be left in the classroom during the day. Please leave commercial merchandise and toys of a violent/collectable nature at home. Please do not allow your child to bring money or expensive items which could get lost or damaged.

Please note that mobile phones and cameras are not permitted.

Your child will be asked to leave these items with their teacher until the end of the school day.

School Bag

Please provide a small, plain bag. We do not have much storage space or many pegs.

Main Lesson Book

Your child will be provided with a main lesson book. This is for school work only. Please don't use this for sketching/notes. Your child will need their main lesson book every day. Lost main lesson books will be replaced at a cost of three pounds. Presentation of work is important. Please encourage your child not too rush their work. Children will be asked to use colour and to border their work and to illustrate. Home work tasks are age appropriate and your child's ability will be taken into account. Unfinished pieces of work or those missed due to absence/forgotten book will need to be completed at home or during lunch break. Children may use crayon, chalk pastel, water colour paint or coloured pencil, but not biro or felt tips in their main lesson books. Wooden cartridge pens are available through the school for children who are writing cursively, at a cost of £8. Stockmar and Ferby pencils and beeswax block crayons are also available to order.

Recorder

Children from 7-12 years learn the descant recorder and will need to bring their recorder every day. Recorders must be of a reputable make such as Yamaha, so that the children can play in tune with one another. Practice at home is necessary, especially when working towards class festival presentations.

Footwear

In the class room children will need a pair of soft soled in door shoes. The class room floor is parquet and can be very slippery. Children will also need to have a pair of Wellington boots every day. Some of the footpaths we use can be very muddy and the grass in the school field can be wet, even on sunny days.

Clothing

Children need to be appropriately dressed for the season. Please provide sun hats/sun cream or waterproof coats, warm hats and Wellingtons as appropriate. Please make sure your children wear comfortable, old clothes. Children will be baking, painting, clay modelling and playing out doors and clothes may get stained. Please avoid slogans, super heroes, television characters, commercial images etc. on clothing and lunchboxes.

Homework Diary

Please provide a small note book for your child to write down their home work tasks. This should be brought every week and will be used to write down home work tasks, including items to be brought in. Please check your child's diary.

Craft Work

Your child will be provided with the materials and tools necessary for their craft work projects, (small loom, knitting needles, crochet hook, darning needles etc.) Please look after these and bring them every week. Occasionally your child will be asked for a donation toward materials.

The School Rhythm

Morning Time

The day begins at 9.30am. Teacher's meetings may take place in the class room before the school day. The class room door is open from 9.25 am. Your child will be greeted individually with a hand shake every morning at the door before the opening circle. For this reason, please make sure your child arrives on time. There is no supervision for children arriving very early.

9.30 am - 10.00 am is a time where parents are welcome to come and spend time in the class to share in a range of enjoyable activities with their child. This start to the day offers a gentle transition for the children from home to school and engages the children in child-led mindful and creative activities that prepare them for the main lesson. Parents may stay for the opening circle before leaving their children by 10.00 am.

Lunch

We eat at 12.30. We aim to establish sound social habits and begin our meal with a verse. Mixed ages share lunch and play together. Tables are laid with a cloth, flowers or candle. When the weather is good we eat outside. Occasionally we may go off site for a picnic. We operate a healthy eating policy, which is viewable in our policy pack. Please provide a healthy packed lunch without artificial or junk foods (no fizzy drinks, sweets, crisps etc.) or foods containing stimulants such as

caffeine or taurine. Please also avoid foods marketed to children that are wrapped in the latest 'character' packaging. Please use a reusable drink bottle and avoid waste. If you need suggestions please speak to your child's Class teacher.

Afternoon Time

The afternoon is spent engaging in a range of topics to provide a balanced and enjoyable day.

A parting circle is held at the end of the day, when the children and teachers share a verse.

The day ends at 3pm for Larches and Chestnuts. All other classes finish at 3.30pm. Children remain in the class room until they are collected. Children must only leave with an agreed adult. Please don't expect us to allow children to leave unless you have clarified in advance any change to the usual collection arrangement, as we would be breaking the law.

Curriculum

Main Lesson Blocks

Each half term is usually six weeks long. For several weeks, each class explores a different main lesson topic. These topics are selected for their age appropriateness from the Waldorf Steiner curriculum and are reflected in Waldorf schools all over the world. Themes include elements of many academic and creative subjects which are approached with Steiner pedagogy.

Social and Emotional Learning Sessions

These sessions aim to develop the core emotional intelligence skills of self awareness, self management and relationship skills, such as identifying and understanding feelings, expressing and managing feelings in healthy ways, recognizing choices in responding to feelings, developing empathy, self esteem, peaceful problem solving and relaxation. The sessions also aim to foster a respect and understanding of the natural environment. The sessions can include circle time, stories and creative arts, literacy, outdoor learning, role plays and class discussion.

Outdoor Learning

We aim to bring some outdoor learning into the school week for all age groups. This may be through session activities being held in the gardens and outdoor spaces, gardening, forest school activities and play time. We aim to spend some of each day out of doors, come rain or shine.

Music Sessions

All children participate in musical education, including singing and playing instruments. We have a qualified music teacher and several musicians among our staff. We are joined by a choir leader who supports teachers and children to prepare for festival presentations.

Languages

Currently, most classes have one language lesson a week with a subject teacher. German, Spanish and French are taught. We hope that all classes will participate in language learning during the coming year.

Waldorf Education Principles

Waldorf Education works for all types of children, irrespective of learning style and ability. Waldorf education recognizes specific stages of child development and individual soul qualities.

Various books on Waldorf education are available to borrow from the school office. It is essential that parents make themselves aware of the principles of Waldorf education and work with us to support their children's development. Please read some basic books on Waldorf education before choosing to apply to Red River.

Screen Time

Social media, television and inappropriate computer use is considered contrary to our educational aims. Many children's movies and computer games involve violence, frightening scenes, inappropriate language, and age inappropriate content.

We ask that parents support our work by mindfully monitoring and restricting the television programmes, movies and computer games accessed and limiting screen time. Please bear in mind that age ratings are not always an accurate or reliable guide to suitability.

Timetable

| | Larches | Chestnuts | Willows | Sycamores | Beeches |
|------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Monday | | Main Lesson <i>Ruth</i> | Main Lesson <i>Josie</i> | Main Lesson <i>Adeline</i> | |
| | | Spanish <i>Emilie</i> | German <i>Vicky</i> Yoga <i>Josie</i> | SEL <i>Amanda</i> Maths <i>Ginny</i> | |
| Tuesday | | | Main Lesson <i>Josie</i> | Main Lesson <i>Adeline</i> | Main Lesson <i>Bev</i> |
| | | | Art <i>Adeline</i> | French <i>Emilie</i> English <i>Jenny</i> | Science <i>Ruth</i> |
| Wednesday | Main Lesson <i>Karenza</i> | Main Lesson <i>Ruth</i> | | | Main Lesson <i>Bev</i> |
| | <i>Karenza</i> | SEL <i>Amanda</i> | | | Art <i>Adeline</i> |
| Thursday | | | Main Lesson <i>Josie</i> | Science Games <i>Ruth</i> | Drama <i>Adeline</i> |
| | | | Ecological Intelligence <i>Amanda</i> | Yoga <i>Josie</i> Art <i>Adeline</i> | Yoga <i>Josie</i> Singing <i>Gail</i> |
| Friday | Main Lesson <i>Karenza</i> | Main Lesson <i>Ruth</i> | | | GCSE Maths <i>Ginny</i> |
| | <i>Karenza</i> | Pottery Gardening <i>Aga</i> | | | GCSE English <i>Jenny</i> |

Community

A key aim of Red River is to share the development and education of children with family, school and community.

Parent Council

Parental involvement in the child's education and school is an important part of the ethos at Red River and we aim to offer a variety of ways in which parents can get involved with the community.

We are developing a Parent Council which will be a way for parents to contribute to the running and development of the school. The Parent Council will be a way that parents can:

- share ideas and contribute to the decision making of the setting;
- express their views on various topics related to their child's development and education;
- explore ways that parents can contribute and get involved at Red River;
- plan and deliver various Parent projects.

We hope that each class will have a Parent Class Contact who will be responsible for liaising with the parents in the class about parent's social events, coordinating a phone tree, and organizing social and educational events outside of the school timetable for the class that can further enrich the children's and community development.

A Parent Council will be held each term where parents and Parent Class Contacts can meet together and share ideas, provide feedback for the school and discuss a range of topics.

Please get involved with supporting your child's class and their teacher and see Amanda if you are interested in the role of the Parent Class Contact or the Parent Council.

The dates of the Parent Council will be advertised on the Main Noticeboard, in Newsletters and communicated by the Parent Class Contact.

Parent Teacher Meetings

Every term we offer an opportunity for parents to meet with staff to ask questions and discuss their children, by appointment. Each class teacher keeps a record of their students' development, to which other members of staff may contribute.

Please speak to your child's class teacher.

Festivals

We celebrate regular festivals throughout the year. These are integral to the learning that takes place at Red River and it is a requirement that you and your child attend. These are arranged by the Festival Committee, class teachers and

volunteers. We are always keen for parents to get involved with the work of the festival committee. The children work towards these festivals by preparing class presentations to share with the whole school. Some festivals take place during the school week and parents will be invited to attend. Others will take place at weekends and your child will need to be accompanied by an adult. Major festivals that fall on a week end are Advent Fayre, Easter Fayre and Midsummer Fayre. We also celebrate Martinmas in the evening with a lantern walk, and Michaelmas with an annual school play of George and the Dragon.

Craft Night

Every other Monday parents meet socially to learn and share craft activities and prepare for festivals. Materials are provided. Please contact Vicky Chalmers on the Parent's Facebook page.

Book Study and Singing

Meditation, singing and anthroposophical book study take place in the classroom on alternate Wednesdays from 6.30pm provided there is enough support. Please confirm with Adeline or Vicky Boehm.

Allotment

Children, staff and parents have created a garden and animal area behind the school building. From time to time gardening days are arranged and we welcome any time you can give to this project. Dates are shared on the Facebook page. Each class takes a share in the responsibility of feeding and caring for the chickens.

Birthdays

Birthdays are considered to be very important at Red River. Younger children participate in a birthday story especially written for the individual child. Older children are honoured by staff and class mates with a special song. We encourage upper school children to bring a birthday cake to share with their class mates, but ask that it be decorated with paper/flowers etc. rather than icing and sweets.

Volunteers

We welcome the support of volunteers at Red River Waldorf and often share requests for support such as cleaning, play ground duty etc on the FB page or on the notice board at school. Please look out for an opportunity to help. Volunteers who are left unattended with children must have a DBS check through the school. The cost of this is usually covered by Red River Waldorf. Visitors must sign in and may not work with children unsupervised. Regular volunteers have a volunteer agreement and policies. They undergo in house induction and receive regular support from a Volunteer Mentor.

Your Role

In order to meet the standards of the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship, we are required to include essential parts of the Waldorf curriculum. Your child will experience elements that are not common practice in state maintained schools. Please ensure you are familiar with and are respectful of the ethos and practices of the Waldorf curriculum and ensure that you are happy with these before enrolling your child. You will be expected to uphold these principles. If you have any questions, we will be happy to discuss our methods and provide material to support you in developing your understanding. Your child will feel secure if you show your interest in their journey and value their school experience. This could include encouraging your child to tackle their hand craft project during the week, or helping them to practise their morning verse.

You will be required to attend school festivals and work days, and to take a turn on the cleaning rota. Details of these types of events will often be shared on the notice board in the corridor.

Recycling

We have bins at school for recycling paper and compost. Please encourage your children to use materials responsibly. Please keep lunch packaging to a minimum and ask children can take their plastic home to recycle.

Lost Property

Unclaimed completed work and lost items are placed in a box in the corridor. Please note that half way through each term, and at the end of term, these items are disposed of. We regret we don't have sufficient space to store these items.

Communication

We consider the relationship between school and home to be very important. We acknowledge that there is often valuable and essential information for the teachers to share with parents and for parents to share with the school to support the schools running and the children's best interests.

There are several ways that we have developed for the parents and teachers to communicate effectively with each other.

Confidentiality of information is important at Red River. Please consider this in communications. Thank you.

Contact Details

General email enquiries can be made to the email address:
redriverwaldorf@gmail.com

We endeavour to answer emails every Friday.

You can speak to the Chair of the College of Teachers on 07749311744 Fridays during the day and also on Wednesday between 3.45pm and 5.30pm.

Class Teachers

Each class teacher will have a school email address and school mobile telephone number.

Each class teacher has their own clinic times, during which they can be contacted by parents. Alternatively, the Parent Class contact may be able to answer your question.

Teachers Email Addresses

Class Teachers

Larches Class teacher

karenza@cornwallwaldorf.org

Chestnuts Class teacher

ruth@cornwallwaldorf.org

Willows Class teacher

josie@cornwallwaldorf.org

Sycamores Class teacher

adeline@cornwallwaldorf.org

Beeches Class teacher

bevan@cornwallwaldorf.org

Specialist Subject Teachers

Languages

emilie@cornwallwaldorf.org

vickyb@cornwallwaldorf.org

Social and emotional development

amanda@cornwallwaldorf.org

Maths

ginny@cornwallwaldorf.org

English

jenny@cornwallwaldorf.org

Teacher Contact

Please make an appointment with your child's class teacher if you would like to discuss or share information about your child.

If you would like to discuss any matter related to your child's progress in a specific subject please make an appointment to meet with the relevant subject teacher.

If you need to share some change of routine, such as an anticipated absence, with your class teacher, please put it in a note. Teachers have many conversations with parents each day and do not always have time to make a note of details. They will appreciate a note from home.

Parent Class Contact

Parent Class contacts are parents who aim to support the communication of key social events and Parent Council events to the group of parents in a class. In certain events the school may use a phone tree to communicate information. This will be managed by the Parent Class Contact.

Parent Council

The Parent Council is a way in which parents can share their views and ideas on aspects related to the school running and development.

We also hold termly parents open meetings whereby we discuss upcoming festivals and provision development. You will be notified of these in the weekly newsletter.

Main Noticeboard

Any information that the teachers would like the parents to know about their child's week, upcoming events or key information will be posted on the Main Noticeboard in the hall. Please check regularly to ensure you are aware of any relevant information you may need to know.

Newsletters

Important information and news is sent home with the children in a seasonal newsletter. Please check your child's bag and folder for these.

Teacher Letters

Sometimes the class teachers or specialist subject teachers will have information to share with parents and letters will be sent home with the children.

Closed Facebook Page and Website

Homework tasks, festival dates and curriculum support may be shared on the Red River Waldorf Parents' Community Facebook page, and our website. You must apply to be accepted. For safety reasons the page has restricted settings. Our Website address is www.cornwallwaldorf.org. Any important information posted on the website by the school will also be posted on the Main Noticeboard or in a Newsletter.

Please do not use Facebook or other social media to make any personal comments about children or for other school matters. If you would like to discuss a matter please make an appointment with your child's Class Teacher. Your class teacher will have a school mobile phone and school email address. Please use these methods of contact and observe your class teacher's clinic hours.

Complaints

If you have a specific complaint to make, please contact your child's class teacher in the first instance, as soon as possible after an incident has occurred. Our Complaints Policy is available to view in the classroom and it outlines the procedures a parent should follow if they would like to make a complaint. Serious complaints will be processed by the board of teachers and trustees.

Financial information

Fees, Invoices, Payments

Invoices are issued during the first week of each half term. Fees must be paid half termly in advance.

Each half term consists of approximately 6 weeks. Details of term dates and fees can be found on our website and in the classroom and also can be found on your invoice.

Payments can be made by BACS to Red River Waldorf, Santander, account number 78416335, sort code 09-01-28. Please use your child's name in the reference box.

Fees are still payable even if your child is off sick, on holiday or you are unable to attend for another reason.

If the session is unavoidably closed due to staff sickness or any other reason that cannot be resolved, then a session will be provided in lieu.

If you decide to terminate your child's attendance part way through a term, fees paid are non refundable and you are responsible for the remaining weeks of the half term.

If fees remain outstanding 14 days from the date of the invoice, then we will ask that your child be removed from Red River until such fees are paid up to date and further advance fees are paid.

Tax Credits

For families eligible for working family tax credits who work 16 hours or more, up to 70% of fees may be claimed as childcare costs.

<https://www.gov.uk/help-with-childcare-costs>

You can get help paying for early years childcare provided by any school if the child is under 5.

You can also get help paying for childcare for a child of 5 or over from a registered independent school. Please see the above site for details before calling the Tax Credit Helpline on 0345 300 3900. You will be asked the name of the provider (Red River Waldorf) the child's start date, the registration number (EY487881).

The approving body is OFSTED. We are registered on the Voluntary, Compulsory and Early Years Register.

Legalities

Red River Waldorf is known to the Department of Education and SWSF as an 'out of school' educational provision for the Waldorf Steiner inspired curriculum. We are in the process of registering as an independent school. Children over compulsory school age are registered as home educating and attend up to three

days per week. Until our school registration is complete, parents remain wholly responsible for providing their child with a full time education suitable -

(a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and

(b) to any special educational needs he may have,

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise where they are over compulsory school age. (Education act 1996 section 7)

Red River Waldorf is affiliated with the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship and is registered with Ofsted on the Compulsory Child Register for children 5-8 years and the Voluntary Child Register for children age 8+ and as such we are bound by their welfare requirements.

Class Structure

Children remain with their class teacher between class one and eight, age 7 -14 years, after which the class guardian supports the group on a personal level, and subject teachers take all classes, including main lesson blocks. At Red River, Larches is the equivalent to class one in a Steiner Waldorf setting (not main stream). Chestnuts is class two, Willows combined class three and four, and Sycamores, five and six. Beeches class is Red River's upper school, where the children may participate in GCSE subjects before leaving us to go on to college or another chosen path.

Child Record and Enrolment

As part of the admission procedure you will be required to fill in a document with your child's personal details. This will be held confidentially at school and is protected under the data protection act. You will also be required to indicate that you are happy for your child to leave the site with a named adult and whether you are happy for your child to appear in photographs. These details must be updated every year.

Policies and Mission Statement

Our mission statement and policies for safeguarding, data protection, behaviour, complaints, admissions etc. can be viewed online at www.redriverwaldorf.org. These documents are also held at the school and can be viewed on request.

Children with Additional Needs

Children with additional needs are considered for admission on an individual basis, after a full discussion of the child's needs with the parent/guardian, taking into account the practical restrictions, and a trial period. Where possible we aim to support all children to access to Red River Waldorf in some form.

Board of Trustees

The Red River trustees are a group of adults with various knowledge and skills from all walks of life who represent parents of children in all classes, as well as those without children at the school, in order to ensure unbiased proceedings. Information from the Parents Council meetings will be communicated to the Board of Trustees. Members are volunteers who are giving their time for free to assist in the smooth running of Red River. The trustees are concerned with the charitable status of the school.

Children's Rules

At the start of each year, the class teacher will work with the children to create a set of appropriate rules for the stage of development and the activities the class participate in.

In addition, please make your child aware of the following GENERAL RULES, which were compiled by children attending Red River in 2015.

Be kind - try not to hurt others' feelings.

Look after your self (have breakfast on a school morning, get an early night before a school day, take care in the car park and field).

Take care of school property. Don't damage things.

Don't lose your book/recorder.

Remember to bring your book, recorder, lunch, coat, craft work.

Do your best at set tasks at home or in school.

Don't climb indoors.

Don't shout indoors.

Listen to the teacher and others, don't chat or play recorder while people are speaking.

Don't bring junk foods.

Don't bring in collectable toys.

No swearing.

Respect each others differences.

Ask to leave the room, play ground, field etc.

No war games, den ownership or playing that sticks are weapons.

Make new children feel welcome.

Don't leave people out; make sure every one has a turn/partner.

No biro or felt tips in main lesson book.

Use main lesson book for set work only.

Keep your self safe and look out for others.