



Comox Valley Waldorf School

Preschool 2019-20

Weekly Rhythm

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Baking	Painting	Baking	Painting	Nature Walk
Oatmeal	Bread	Oatmeal	Bread	Rice

Daily Rhythm

8:30 Arrival/ **Outdoor Play**

8:40 **Morning Circle** (Parents goodbye)

9:30 Tidy Up/ Bathroom Break

9:45 **Mousey Snack/ Crescent Walk**

10:00 Back to School/ **Indoor Time**

-----Cubby Time/ Wash Hands-----

10:25 **Snack Time**

10:45 **Free Indoor Play/ Daily Activity**

12:05 Tidy up

12:10 **Story Time**

12:20 **Lunch Time**

12:45 -Cubbies-

1:00 Dismissal / Extended Care

*On Fridays, we will visit the neighboring Cousins Park during our Outdoor time. **Please meet us in the yard before 8:45** or find us at the park after you have dropped of your child's belongings.

Extended Care

1:00- 1:15 Tidy up/ Set Mats/ Bathroom Break
1:15- 2:00 Story Time/ Nap Time/ Quiet Activity Time
2:00- 3:00 Free Play (Indoor or Outdoor) / House keeping
3:00 Pick up time

First week of school

Tuesday Sept. 3th: Beach Day Kin Beach 9:00am- 11:30 am Picnic and Play

Wednesday September 4th: Open House /Neighborhood Walk Day 9:00am-12:00pm

Nature Walk/ Visit at Preschool (Meet at Preschool yard)

Thursday September 5th: Beach Day Kin Beach 9:00am- 11:30am Picnic and Play

Friday September 6th: Open House /Neighborhood Walk Day 9:00am-12:00pm

Nature Walk/ Visit at Preschool (Meet at Preschool yard)

[Kin Beach Google Maps](#)

*To facilitate a smooth transition, parents/ caregivers are asked to accompany their child on these first days. If it is difficult to stay for the whole morning, feel free to make arrangements that suit your family.

*These first days are very special: we would like to invite extended family and siblings to the beach, as it is a wonderful way of sparking community.

Because of space constrains, we ask that only parents/ primary caregivers and younger siblings attend the Open House. (If this is an issue, please let me know and we can chat about it).

Home Visits

Home visits present the opportunity for children and teachers to meet in a familiar and comfortable place for the child, before the business of the school year arrives. Seeing that their parents and teachers can share some friendly time together, children experience that we are all part of the same community.

The visit usually lasts around thirty- forty minutes and it is a time for the teacher to meet the child in his/ her environment: children might choose to show the teacher their favorite book or toy, their bedroom where their teddy sleeps or the family's pet favorite napping spot.

Home visits are not mandatory. If this is not a good time for your family, I understand completely, and I will be happy to reconnect with you closer to the school year.

Since home visits are meant to be a light affair, please bring your questions regarding "school housekeeping" to our **Welcome Orientation evening**:

Welcome (Orientation) evening

August 23rd **6:30 pm- 8:00 pm** **Preschool Class**

In order to ensure a smooth transition into the school year, please make every effort possible to attend this meeting. The class is embarking on a journey together and this will be a chance for all of us to meet and discuss what we need to know regarding meals, clothing, festivals, calendars and other school considerations. If you cannot attend your group's meeting, please let Ms Lucia know and we can find a way for you to be updated.

Housekeeping Considerations

Drop off and Pick up:

Preschool begins outdoors at 8:30.

Before that time, Ms Lucia and Ms Jumana are preparing the classroom so it is ready for the children when they come inside.

*As we will be starting the day outside, please make sure your child comes dressed appropriately for the weather (see notes on Clothing and Warmth).

*Lunch boxes and backpacks can be dropped off in the cubby area upon arrival.

Morning Circle

At 8:40, the Morning Circle Song will invite you and your child to join us. The chance to gather as one before our day begins offers the children the certainty of the link between home and school. It also offers a predictable way of parting. Once the circle is done, please warmly say goodbye to your child and take off for the morning. Predictability and consistency, especially in the face of teary departures, build confidence in the process. It also fosters one's own resilience to move past a hard moment and find connection in teachers, friends and the wonderful gifts they day will bring.

On Fridays, **we will be going for Nature Walk at 8:45 sharply**. If you miss us, please catch up with us at Cousins Park. (If this happens, please make sure to leave your child's lunch box at school).

Pick up (1:00- 3:00)

We ask that you please arrive on time, and in case of an unexpected event/ early pick up, you inform either the teachers or our Admin Team.

Pick up happens at 1:00 in the cubby area.

*Since we finish our day with Story Time, please be mindful of noise in the hallway. Once the children exit the class, you are welcome to warmly reconnect and support them in getting ready to go home (change shoes/ get dressed/ gather their belongings/ say goodbye.

* Your child's backpack and lunchbox will travel with them every day.

It is always a good idea to check your child's cubbies for wet/ dirty clothing, crafts that are going home, messages and photocopies, etc.

Since the front yard is our shared outdoor classroom, we ask that you are mindful of other classes if they happen to be outside. If the yard is being utilized, Red Tree Coffee Shop, Playhouse Cafe, Martin Park or Cousin's Park are wonderful places to gather close by.

-We also ask that each family contributes to keeping our yard tidy and our tools and toys in top shape. Children will gladly help with tidy up if we actively participate as well.

Extended Care

At 1:00, the children who will remain in extended care will transition with their teacher into Quiet Time.

All children will be given the opportunity and encouraged to nap. The teacher will support this transition by telling stories, reading books, and overall being present as the children wind down from their day.

As the year progresses, not all children will require naps. There will be quiet activities available (play dough, sewing, block building, etc) that will allow each child to settle into a calm space.

Later in the afternoon, the children will be ready to resume their work- play! And if willing, can join in activities such as carding, dehydrating, crafting, etc, and/ or outdoor exploration.

Please pack a few snacks that can be eaten midafternoon.

Neighborhood/ Nature Walk

In order to develop an early connection with our environment and expand out learning opportunities, each group will go for a daily Neighborhood Walk. After the class has settled into a group, the 3 Day Class will be engaging in weekly Nature Walks.

We are located within walking distance of Cousins Park, which offers a large grassy field, a slow running stream which houses salmon fry every year, and small forested areas and groves.

Being outside also allows us to follow the rhythm of the seasons and appreciate the changes they bring as the year goes by. We strive to go out in any weather, so we can appreciate what the elements bring: puddles, frost, muddy hills perfect for sliding down in, etc.

In case of extreme weather/ slippery or dangerous conditions, the class will remain in the yard.

Clothing and Warmth

Following the principle that “*we will weather the weather, whatever the weather, whether we like it or not*”, we do not shy away from “inclement” weather. **We ask that your child arrives ready to play and stay outside for at least an hour.** Since children’s regulatory systems are still developing, we take extra care to provide warm, dry layers and to protect their heads during heat or cold.

- We will wear gum boots all year round: they are easy for children to put on by themselves, and protect their little feet from water, cold, bumps and slivers. That way, their attention can be focused on playing. In late Spring, we can reevaluate if the weather is quite hot.
- In cold weather: mittens, thick socks, hats and scarves must accompany
- Raincoats, rain pants or muddy buddies.
- In summer, we ask that your child brings a sun hat, and wears sunscreen if that is customary in your home.

We ask that your child brings a **travelling school back pack with the following labelled items:**

- a couple of extra pairs of underwear and socks,
- two shirts, at least one of them long sleeved
- comfortable pants
- 2/3 plastic bags for wet clothing.

***Please make sure to bring/ take your backpack and check it every day.** It is amazing what can be found hiding in there! As per our Media and Marketing policy, **please remember backpacks may not display cartoon characters.**

*Your child will need a comfortable, easy-to-fasten **pair of indoor shoes** with waterproof soles-

We practice safety drills that require us to be ready to go outside regardless of the weather. These shoes will stay at school.

*Please make sure you label every single item of clothing that comes to school- things have a way of getting lost and jumbled up!

Snacks

Meals and everything around them are a big part of our day. We share our time and interest in each other’s stories as we enjoy a welcome pause before or after play.

We will share a snack prepared by the teachers consisting of grains and fruit/ vegetables every day around 10:30. **Parents are asked to provide lunch which we will eat together soon after noon.**

When packing lunch for your children or the class, please keep this into consideration:

- We ask you please not pack candy, chips or fast food.

-To minimize ecological impact and offer a marketing free environment, please recycle food packaging at home (see note on Media and Marketing).

-It will be much easier if the food your children bring do not need to be reheated, as we do not have a microwave. Please consider a thermos if sending pasta, soup, etc.

-Also, less is more when helping young children eat in a larger setting with new friends. It is best to pack more quantity of three or four items that many small amounts of varied things.

-We will not need water bottles, as water will be provided and available throughout the day.

Some lunch ideas are:

crackers/ veggies and dip/hummus quesadillas/wraps

sandwiches/ salads tortilla chips/salsa/guacamole sliced fruit/ cheese/meats

yogurt/ granola raisins/ almonds/ seeds berries/ seaweed/ baked goods

***For after care, please pack an extra few snacks that can be eaten midafternoon.**

Sharing Basket

Bringing a fruit or vegetable to share is a way of linking home life and preschool time, as well as allowing the opportunity to share with the rest of our community. We share fruit or vegetables that can be eaten raw during our Snack Time. Some favorites include apples, pears, oranges and citrus, avocados, cucumbers, peas, and berries.

If you have surplus food that can be processed as part of our curriculum, it will be more than welcome too. Our days revolve around the seasons and the home and we look forward to using Nature's gifts to share with our community.

A sharing basket will be placed by the Preschool door. We encourage your child and you to contribute a food item or two we can share throughout the week.

Allergies

The Comox Valley Waldorf School is a peanut free zone. Dogs are asked to remain outside the gate, for health reasons. A more complete list of allergies will be sent to you shortly so as to facilitate meal planning and snack sharing.

Student Illness Policy

If your child is ill, please keep them at home. Children returning to school after an absence due to illness may not be accepted if they exhibit symptoms not limited to:

- fever
- excessive coughing
- rashes
- lice
- excessive running nose
- fatigue
- conjunctivitis

These symptoms can limit the child's ability to fulfill the normal expectations of a student in a classroom. As well, children exhibiting symptoms such as these can transfer illness to their classmates, their families, the faculty and staff and the greater school community. Children developing symptoms such as these while at school may be sent home. If a child develops a fever above 37.8 C (100 F) the parent will be called to pick them up. Children who experience high fevers may not attend school until 24 hours have passed since the fever has abated. Children who experience vomiting or diarrhea may not attend school until 24 hours after the last episode. All decisions regarding illness and the classroom will be made by the class teacher, with the health of the whole community in mind.

Media and Marketing

In order to provide a "white canvas" in which children's own inner pictures can be brought forth, we are constantly striving to create a marketing-free environment. Young children are so impressionable that once a media or marketing character creeps into play, it is hard to break free from it.

Often times, children will create their play around the images that are the most present within them. **In order to encourage them to create their own play, we strongly encourage students do not use media before bedtime or school.**

We understand it is hard to upkeep, but we ask you help in this striving. **We ask that children do not bring clothing, lunch boxes or accessories with cartoon characters on them.** It is helpful to have clothes, backpacks and toys that are appropriate for home, and a set of unlabeled, character free items that are appropriate for school.

Toys

We ask that home toys stay at home, or in the car when parents drive away.

Just as we have certain toys at home, we have different toys at school.

The toys in the classroom have been picked because of their sensory qualities and because they are open ended: they encourage the children to put of themselves in order to give them life, giving them the chance to recreate their environment anew every day.

It is actually very hard for a preschooler to share that bit of home with the other children (even when they think they are ready for it), and if something were to happen to their loved possession, it could be quite a negative experience.

If your child needs a bit of the comfort of home at school, you could make a necklace or bracelet together the child can wear as a link between the two places.

Another way to feel close to home is bringing seasonal items you have gathered around for the Nature Table. Children can share the story of how they came about them with their friends and have a little bit of that wonderful family experience with them at school.

Birthdays

Birthdays at school are a magical way to celebrate each child's special presence in our classroom community. We will celebrate a child's first birthday in preschool with their family, while making the second or third a class event.

If it is your child's first year:

Parents, siblings and close family members of the birthday child are invited to join us on their special day for lunch, cake and a birthday story.

Please let Ms Lucia know if you feel it is important for us to work something out in the case your child's birthday falls when we are off school. Some families/ children prefer to still celebrate while others would rather skip it.

Please be prepared to think about the circumstances around your child's birth and the first years of their life. Details you are willing to share will be woven into each child's birthday story, such as the weather on that day, milestones they achieved each year, etc.

If we have already celebrated at school:

-Your child is welcome to bring a family photo album to share with the class.

-If you would like to offer a special snack (baked goods/ fruit/ left over cake) please let me know and we will make sure it happens.

* Ms Lucia will contact you close to your child's birthday.

Email and Parent- Teacher Communication

In order to share what the class has been living into, Ms Lucia will send a monthly newsletter, including a seasonal song or verse, an overview of the daily life of the Preschool and a few illustrative pictures.

Also, the school sends out a school- wide weekly bulletin, containing the upcoming schedule of events, educational articles and information about our school community.

In striving to be a healthy and caring community, the Comox Valley Waldorf School encourages and stands by the principles of clear, non-violent and direct communication. If you ever have a concern, comment, question or suggestion, please address your class teachers (Ms Lucia) first.

She can be reached by email (lucia.p@cvwaldorf.com). **There are also two Parent Teacher Conferences that happen around November and February**, where teachers and parents touch base about the children. Ms Lucia is also available for interviews in the afternoon if they are scheduled ahead of time.

Class Parent and Involvement Opportunities

In order to support the teachers, class and to facilitate parent communication and event planning, usually a few parents volunteer to lend a helping hand.

Their role is to be involved in the activities and be aware of the needs of the class and act as a liaison between faculty and the parent body. These parents might send out reminders about upcoming field trips and festivals, help gather or build materials needed for the class, coordinate craft making for the Winter Faire, etc.

Since many hands make light work, these parents might ask for assistance coordinating and hosting Parent Evenings, fundraising, etc.

As one of the governing bodies of the school, the Parent Group is constantly creating new avenues for improving the school's opportunities and experiences. This might involve being part of a committee, joining the Board, sharing skills or hobbies such as crafting, woodworking, maintenance, marketing ideas, etc.

If you have any skills, time or desire to pitch in, please let your teacher and/ or class parent know: the more people involved, the richer the children's experiences will be.

Parent Evenings/ Events

Parent events occur throughout the year. They provide a chance for the adults to connect and engage in discussion about a topic pertinent to their children's development: early years development, parenting, the fundamentals of Waldorf education, etc.

Sometimes, Parent Events will be geared toward and hosted within a specific class, other times, they may be school wide or involve the wider community, as when we ask guest speakers to participate.

In Waldorf education, the partnership between faculty and parents is essential to the wellbeing of the school. It is important your child is represented at this meeting, as all the topics have been selected with the young ones in mind.

Events will be advertised by email and on the school's website.

Festivals and Field Trips

Festivals allow us to connect with the rhythms of the Earth and the community we live in. Many festivals are celebrated school wide while others are held within each class. Some of these are The Festival of Courage (Michaelmas), The Festival of Compassion (Martinmas/Lantern

Festival), the Winter Faire, The Festival of Wisdom (Advent Spiral), the May Festival... please refer to the school calendar, class emails and the monthly newsletter to know when they occur.

They are also a chance for every community member to participate in creating something special: many of our class crafts revolve around a seasonal event, and parents, teachers and children prepare items and presentations for many festivals,

Field trips are a way to reach out into the larger community and participate in its activities: every year we like to explore the beauty of the Comox Valley beaches and parks. **Parents or caregivers are asked to attend with their young ones.** If you cannot attend, usually another parent volunteers to chaperone: please let Ms Lucia know and we will find a way.

Field trips will be scheduled with plenty of time to figure out arrangements if it is tricky to assist. Siblings are always welcome.

“Our highest endeavor must be to develop free human beings
who are able of themselves to impart purpose and direction to their lives.
The need for imagination, a sense of truth, and a feeling of responsibility—
these three forces are the very nerve of education.”

Rudolf Steiner

Blessings on our year,

Ms Lucia and Ms Jumana