



PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK



Working from the indications of Rudolf Steiner, we strive to educate the whole being of each child in head, heart, and hands. We envision this education set within a community guided by goodness, beauty, and truth. Further, we seek to plant the seeds for our students to enter the changing world with purpose, as self-directed adults, with a lifelong love of learning, who are intellectually and spiritually free, socially responsible, and emotionally balanced.

School Vision Statement

A healthy social life is found only when, in the mirror of each soul, the whole community finds its reflection, and when, in the whole community, the virtue of each one is living.

Rudolf Steiner



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West Coast Steiner School

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Nollamara WA 6061

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www.wcss.wa.edu.au

Office and General Enquiries: reception@wcss.wa.edu.au

School Administrator: education@wcss.wa.edu.au

Finance Officer: financeofficer@wcss.wa.edu.au

Enrolments Officer: enrolments@wcss.wa.edu.au

School Office Hours:

Monday	8:30am – 3:30pm
Tuesday	8:30am – 3:30pm
Wednesday	8:30am – 3:30pm
Thursday	8:30am – 3:00pm
Friday	8.30am – 3.30pm

School Attendance Hours:

Monday	8.30am – 3.05pm
Tuesday	8.30am – 3.05pm
Wednesday	8.30am – 3.05pm
Thursday	8.30am – 2.15pm
Friday	8.30am – 3.05pm

2019 Term Dates:

Term 1:	Tuesday 05 February – Friday 12 April
Term 2:	Tuesday 30 April – Friday 28 June
Term 3:	Monday 22 July – Friday 27 September
Term 4:	Monday 14 October to Tuesday 17 December

The Council and School Management

West Coast Steiner School is a self-governing, independent private school that works under a collaborative leadership model.

School Council

The overall responsibility for the school's governance rests with the school council, which is comprised of parents, staff and other external leaders (as needed) and is elected by West Coast Steiner School community members. The duties and responsibilities of the school Council are set out clearly in the school constitution. A copy of the constitution is available from reception.

School Administrator

The School Administrator is employed by the school Council, and has delegated authority from Council to run the school on a day to day basis. The role of the School Administrator is to provide leadership within the school and to ensure that the school is run in a legal and compliant way.

West Coast Steiner School Community Association (WCSSCA)

WCSSCA is the school's community body. All families who join the school also join the association.

College of Teachers

The College of Teachers is comprised of senior members of the two faculties; the Primary Faculty and the Early Childhood Faculty. The responsibility for the education of students is taken by the whole of the teaching staff. The College of Teachers supports both the Early Childhood and Primary Faculties with decisions on policy, staffing and curriculum issues.

Administration/Reception

The Administration and Reception team functions to support teachers, students and parents and to ensure that enrolments, policy and procedure and the school's financial assets are managed effectively.

Professional Associations

WCSS is a member of the following associations:

- Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia;
- Steiner Education Australia;
- Australian Association for Rudolf Steiner Early Childhood Education;
- International Rudolf Steiner Kindergarten Association; and
- Playgroup WA

Quick Reference Section of Practical Information for Parents

1. Parking Information

Kiss 'n' Drive

The school has a designated Kiss 'n' Drive facility at the front entrance of the school on Mayfair St. When using the Kiss 'n' Drive, please proceed to the furthest bay available, towards the Nollamara Ave end of the bays. If there is no bay available, there are options to legally park further away, or you may slowly circle the block until a bay becomes available.

Please be conscious that *all drivers, without exception*, are to make the *safety of the children* their priority at drop-off and pick-up time. Double parking, verge parking and parking across the road is not a safe option for children.

Please be courteous to our neighbours and only park in the designated areas along Mayfair St, Constance St and Myimbar Way. Please familiarise yourself with the parking regulations that are clearly signposted in the area. The City of Stirling monitors these areas and does issue parking infringements.

Please do not block access to resident's bins. If bins are unable to be collected and emptied by the City of Stirling refuse trucks, the school is liable to cover the costs of the refuse collection at a later time. Wherever possible, the offending vehicles will have their details noted and this cost will be passed on to the owner of the vehicle.

2. Channels of Communication

WCSS Website

The school website is regularly updated with information regarding term dates, school events, parent education opportunities and student activities. Please use the website as your first point of contact for details of upcoming events: <http://www.wcss.wa.edu.au/>

The Gazette

The Gazette is published twice per term, and is intended to provide additional information from the School Administrator about the life of the school. It contains articles to inspire a richer understanding of Steiner education, and highlights classroom activities and community events.

Members of the school community may submit relevant articles/items regarding activities within the school or associated with Steiner education. Advertising is accepted at the discretion of school's management but is not necessarily endorsed by the school. The cost is a \$20 donation to the WCSS Building

Fund. These submissions may be handed to reception or emailed to reception@wcss.wa.edu.au

Class Teacher, Noticeboards and Administration Staff

Communication between class teachers and parents regarding special events or class excursions is usually conveyed by a class letter, either provided to students at the end of the day or emailed by the Class Carer. If an individual parent/teacher meeting is required to discuss the needs of an individual child, the teacher will speak directly with the parent.

Noticeboards are located outside most classrooms and should be used for notices relating to school activities only. Teachers must be consulted before notices are put up and they have the right to remove unsuitable material.

Parents are encouraged to seek guidance from the school Reception in cases of uncertainty regarding any issue to do with their child's education, fees or the parent community. Any concerns regarding their child should, in the first instance, be raised with the relevant class teacher. Further, any issues with the teacher should firstly be resolved directly with the teacher; otherwise, a request can be submitted to the School Administrator for resolution. A full copy of the school Grievance Policy is available on the school website.

The school Finance Offer is available to discuss any aspect of your statement of fees, method of payment or collection queries.

Open, positive and respectful communication is paramount within our school for fostering positive relationships between our children, teachers, parents, staff and the wider community. We encourage all parents to review the Parent Code of Conduct policy on our website.

3. Financial Support of the School

School Fees

Our school seeks to make a Steiner education available to as many families as possible, and we are committed to providing a comprehensive Steiner education at a reasonable cost.

Term fees are due on the first day of each term unless you have made alternate arrangements with our Finance Officer. Please ensure that your Ezidebit arrangement is in place prior to the commencement of Term 1 where possible. For assistance with Ezidebit payment please contact the Finance Officer: financeofficer@wcss.wa.edu.au

Donations

Our school has a **building fund** and donations are gratefully accepted. All donations are tax deductible. The **building fund account** details are:

BSB: 633 000
Acct No: 132 717 786.

4. Parent Care of Students on School Grounds

Entry into the school is either via the walkway on Mayfair St, or through the gate leading from the oval at the back of the school. Please do not enter the school grounds via the main staff car park at the front of the school as this poses a safety risk to pedestrians.

To minimise disturbance to both teachers and children, parents are required to move away from the veranda area outside of the class rooms after children have greeted their teacher. Parents are welcome to congregate at the Community Hub after school commences.

Should you be on school grounds (other than in the Community Hub) after 9am, you are required to report to Reception to sign in (and out) and are requested to wear a Visitor badge (and return it on signing out).

Lunch and recess time are part of the school life of children and part of the pastoral responsibilities of the teachers. Parents should not join their children for morning tea, lunch or play except under special circumstances and by prior arrangement with the class teacher.

A duty teacher is rostered to provide supervision for students before school from 8.15am and after school until 3.20pm (Monday to Friday, except Thursday) and 2.30pm (Thursday only). **Children should not be on school grounds outside of these times.**

5. Parent Involvement

Parent involvement is essential for the healthy functioning of our school. Volunteer help is often needed within the class, around the school grounds, during school festivals and within the school community. Parents may choose to become involved with the West Coast Steiner School Community Association (WCSSCA). Please refer to page 9 of this handbook for further details regarding WCSSCA.

Busy Bees are scheduled most terms and are advertised on the school website and noticeboards. Parent volunteer hours count towards the Family Commitment Scheme (FCS) of a minimum of 5 hours/term or 20 hours/year. In the event parents are not available to be involved in the FCS due to work

commitments, a monetary contribution of \$100/term is invoiced to you. Please refer to the Fee Policy for further details or ask about the FCS at Reception, during office hours.

School Council

Parents can be involved in the governance of the school by joining the school Council through election at the annual AGM. The school Council is responsible for the vision, direction and financial budgets of the school. School Council meetings are held a minimum of six times annually and parents who are not elected Councillors can attend meetings as observers should this be of interest. Parents interested in attending a Council meeting in the capacity of an observer should register their interest with the Council Secretary in advance. An email can be sent to Reception, who will then forward the email on to the Council Secretary.

Class Carer

Each class has Class Carer, a parent who assists the class teacher in communicating with parents and organising class events. A Class Carer is appointed each year by the class teacher. Duties delegated to the Class Carer are determined by the class teacher.

Class Parent Evenings

Parent evenings are held in terms 1 and 3 in each primary school class. These evenings offer an opportunity for the class teacher to provide an overview of the class and the curriculum for the term, to discuss general matters, answer questions and plan events. The children's work is also available for parents to view. All parents are required to attend.

Parent Information/ Education Evenings

Opportunities are offered throughout the year for parents to learn more about Steiner education. These information sessions provide an essential link between the child's school life and home life. We strongly recommend that you attend all the information sessions held throughout the year.

6. Lunches

Teachers and parents are aware of the importance of healthy, nutritious food for young children. Simple, plain, home-made food is best. Please do not send 'party-type' food such as chips, chocolate, lollies or chewing gum to school. **Children must not swap or share their food and are encouraged to wash their hands before and after eating.**

Nut Allergy Awareness

The school has a Nut Awareness Policy that is used to raise the awareness of all members of the community regarding severe allergies and to provide a safe

learning environment. **Parents and caregivers are requested to not under any circumstances send nuts or food that contains nuts to school, which includes peanut butter and other nut paste sandwiches.**

7. Dress / Clothing

Clothing is to be plain in colour without any printing, advertising, numbers, pictures or caricatures. Rainbow colours are suggested. Natural fibres such as wool or cotton are most beneficial for children. Black is not to be worn. Following the “colours of the day” guide is recommended, but not mandated:

Monday:	Blue
Tuesday:	Red
Wednesday:	Yellow
Thursday:	Orange
Friday:	Green

Hair that is below shoulder length must be worn up at all times.

For sun protection, tops must cover the shoulders and upper arms. Children may keep sunscreen for their own use in their bags. Midriffs must be covered. Jewellery must not pose a distraction or possibility of injury. Make-up and nail polish must not be worn to school. Shoes suitable for the range of activities undertaken at school, including running and jumping, must be worn. Shoes that are not held securely to the foot, such as scuffs Crocs and slip-ons, are not suitable. For woodworking sessions, enclosed shoes are required. Appropriate length shorts may be worn in warmer weather. For example, the length of shorts should fall on or below the tips of your child’s fingers, when they are standing with their arms by their sides.

All children must wear a hat when outdoors. Students without hats will not be allowed to play outside. Wide brim hats are suggested for sun protection, and those that protect the back of the neck are highly recommended.

During the cooler months, knitted beanies are suitable, but may not be worn indoors. During the wetter months we suggest children wear appropriate wet weather clothing and shoes. You may consider sending your child to school with a change of clothes.

8. Playground Rules

Please assist the teachers by encouraging the following rules:

- Hats and shoes are to be worn always when outside;
- No running, climbing, cycling, skateboarding or rollerblading on the veranda;

- Bicycles, skateboards and scooters are not to be ridden in the playground during school hours;
- Marble play is allowed providing marbles are played at below knee height;
- Sticks may be used for constructive play only, e.g., for building cubbies;
- Older children are not to play in areas reserved for younger children;
- Rough play, swearing or bullying behaviour is not acceptable and must be reported to the teacher on duty immediately.

9. Community

The West Coast Steiner School enjoys and relies on a very high level of support and involvement from parents.

WCSS Community Association (WCSSCA)

WCSSCA is a body comprised of parents, teachers, staff and friends of West Coast Steiner School. The aim of the Association is to promote and support the development of the West Coast Steiner School and its community.

The Community Association's key aims are to:

- Actively fundraise to provide for equipment and services beyond the means otherwise available to the school;
- Initiate and coordinate social events to foster a spirit of community within the school;
- Endeavour to increase the awareness and understanding of Rudolf Steiner's philosophies among members and the wider community;
- Identify and undertake activities aimed at building and improving the image of the school in the wider community;
- Coordinate and initiate the volunteer efforts of members in the physical improvement and maintenance of the school's premises;
- Identify and initiate any other activities which will meet the objectives of WCSSCA and WCSS;
- To build and nurture our school's community of parents.

WCSSCA Operations & Activities

WCSSCA volunteers coordinate many ongoing and one-off activities and endeavours throughout the year, some of which include the running of the wonderful school community shop *Golden Threads*, the Advent Festival, coordinating a parent's Craft Group, and catering coordination for regular and one-off events and school tours.

WCSSCA meets monthly and all members are most welcome to attend and contribute. Dates for meetings are found in the Gazette and Community Memo.

Commented [BST1]: Validate correct policy name and insert here.

Commented [BST2]: Need to make a reference to the purpose / vision of our website and it's usefulness as a resource to parents to keep up to date. Also to advise that the functionality of the current website is being expanded and keep up to date via Gazette. May want to mention a Members area is coming soon.....

Email wcssca@wcss.wa.edu.au

Craft Group

A group of parents meet regularly to do handwork for the school, for our Advent Festival and other school events. All are welcome to attend and no experience is necessary. Further details of the group are advertised in the Gazette.

Golden Threads School Shop

Golden Threads is located within the Community Hub, opposite the school Office. The shop offers a wonderful range of Steiner inspired products, and is a great place to purchase presents, school supplies and coffee! For further details such as opening hours, please email WCSSCA. Golden Threads is run by parent volunteers – if you would like to volunteer please enquire at the shop.

Anthroposophical Study Group

This group meets weekly on Monday evenings. Reading and open discussion of Rudolf Steiner's works takes place at these meetings. No prior knowledge is required to attend these meetings. For further information refer to the school Gazette.

Family Commitment Scheme

This started as a parent initiative and is now managed by the school. Each family helps share the workload of the school with a commitment of time. Each family donates a minimum of 5 hours per term (20 hours per family per year) to agreed volunteer activities at the school. Please refer to the Family Commitment Scheme Policy available on the school website or at the school office.

For those families who are unable to fulfil their commitment hours, there is a monetary contribution charged to your school fees.

This scheme provides a way of deepening parental involvement in the school, of meeting other parents, building connections, strengthening our community and shows our children that we care about their education.

Festivals

The school community comes together for seasonal and cultural festivals. Festivals are an essential part of the curriculum and life of the school.

The school celebrates:

Term 1: Autumn and Easter, Celtic Dance

Term 2: Winter Festival

Term 3: Michael Festival

Term 4: Advent Festival

On some festival days Kindergarten and Primary children finish early. Please refer to the school website for further information.



Suggested Reading List

Steiner Education

- You Are Your Child's First Teacher, Rahima Baldwin
- The Recovery of Man in Childhood, A.C. Harwood
- The Way of a Child, A.C. Harwood
- Creativity in Education: The Waldorf Approach, René Querido
- Rudolf Steiner Education and the Developing Child, Willi Aeppli
- Teaching as a Lively Art, Marjorie Spock
- Children at Play, Heidi Britz-Crecelius
- Education Towards Freedom, Frans Carlgren
- Lifeways: Working with Family Questions, Goodrun Davy and Bons Voors
- Who's Bringing Them Up? Martin Large
- Toward Wholeness: Rudolf Steiner Education in America, M.C. Richards
- Waldorf Parenting Handbook, Lois Cusick
- Festivals, Family, and Food, Diana Carey and Judy Large
- Common Sense Schooling, Roy Wilkinson
- An Introduction to Waldorf Education, Rudolf Steiner
- The Education of the Child, Rudolf Steiner

Suggested additional titles:

- Endangered Minds: Why Children Don't Think and What We Can Do About It, Jane Healy, Ph.D.
- Better Late Than Early, and School Can Wait, Raymond and Dorothy Moore
- The Hurried Child, and Pre-schooler's at Risk, David Elkind
- The Flickering Mind: The False Promise of Technology in the Classroom and How Learning Can Be Saved, Todd Oppenheimer
- Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television, Jerry Mander
- Children Without Childhood, Marie Winn
- The Magical Child, Joseph Chilton Pearce

Our school shop “**Golden Threads**” may have these titles in stock or be able to assist you with finding them.

SECTION 2 – POLICIES

We suggest that you familiarise yourself with the school's policies affecting both parents and students, which are designed to ensure that the school is a safe and healthy learning environment, and that the school meets its community and legislative obligations in an consistent and transparent way.

We have summarised a number of these policies for you. The full policies are available from the school office or on the website. We encourage you to read them in full.

1. CARE OF STUDENTS

School Hours

A punctual and unhurried start to the school day is of enormous benefit to every child.

The teaching hours for Primary Class 1 to Class 6 are 8.30am to 3.05pm Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday and 8.30am to 2.15pm on Thursday.

Parents of primary children are requested to ensure that their children are on the veranda outside their classroom at 8.25am each morning, giving them time to greet friends and settle into school mode before they enter their classrooms at 8.30am. We are building a lifetime of good habits just in this one rhythmic gesture.

A duty teacher is rostered on to provide supervision for students before school from 8.15am and after school until 3.20pm. **Children should not be on the school grounds outside these hours.**

While teaching staff may be at school before 8.15am they are in their classrooms preparing for their day and are not able to supervise children. After 3.15pm teachers may attend meetings or tidy up their rooms or prepare for the next day's teaching, and they are not available to supervise children unless in an emergency. Parents must be at school to collect their child/ren by 3.05pm or have decided for another adult to collect their child/ren. Kindergarten children must be collected by an adult at the classroom and will not be handed over to siblings or other children at the end of the school day.

School rules apply whilst on school grounds, whether children are supervised by teachers or by parents.

Teachers' Supervision of Children

The responsibility of the teachers and their supervision of the children begin when a child is dropped off for school (times as indicated above) in the morning and continues until the child is collected after school in the afternoon. In the case of young children who are taken to the classroom door, supervision begins when the child is handed over to the teacher at the door.

Parents may be at school during school hours for a variety of reasons, but not for the supervision of their children unless their supervision is specifically requested by school staff, usually the Kindergarten or class teacher.

Lunch time and recess time are part of the school life of children and part of the educational and pastoral responsibilities of the teachers. Parents should not join their children for morning tea, lunch or play except under special circumstances and by prior arrangement with the Kindergarten or class teacher.

Any parent may, of course, respond to an emergency involving any children until school staff are able to attend to the situation.

Absences, Late Arrivals and Early Departures

The School Education Act 1999 and School Education Regulations 2000 require a Principal to ensure that attendance records are kept showing for each day 'whether a Student attended, or participated in an educational program; or failed to attend and participate'.

Class registers are marked off twice daily and the information is recorded electronically and used to monitor all absences, late arrivals and early departures.

If your child is late, you must come into the Administration Office and obtain a Late Note, which states the reason why they are late and the arrival time. This late note must be presented to the class teacher.

If your child needs to depart early, please advise the class teacher and sign your child out. The sign out register is located at the school Office.

It is your responsibility to tell us if your child will be absent from school. If your child is absent from school, we ask you to phone the office in the morning before 8.45am and advise the reason, which will then be passed on to the class teacher and recorded appropriately. If the school does not receive notification of an absence, an SMS will be sent seeking clarification regarding the reason for the absence.

Sick Children

If a child falls ill at school, they will be cared for by Office staff and you will be notified. Please be mindful that you are expected to collect your child in a timely manner.

If a child is unwell, quiet rest at home is best. Most children can cope at school with a mild cold. Information is available from the parents' library on how to treat various childhood illnesses.

Illness affects a child's performance and behaviour at school. It is very important that class teachers be informed of any illness or infection, especially anything that may be contagious.

The following common conditions are highly infectious and if a child is thought to be infected, the child's parents will be contacted immediately and asked to keep the child out of school until the condition has cleared:

- Herpes/Cold Sores and School Sores;
- Conjunctivitis;
- Worms;
- Head Lice;
- Whooping Cough;
- Chicken Pox.

Any positive diagnosis of infectious diseases should be passed on to the school as soon as possible.

Whilst immunisation in WA is not compulsory and is regarded by our school as a parental choice, we do ask that you consider this when determining if your child is well enough to attend school.

At school, teachers are expected to attend to children with simple first aid needs (such as cuts, insect bites, bruises, splinters).

All parents are asked to provide the school with written permission to administer first aid treatment to their child. A new "Consent to Administer First Aid" form needs to be filled in annually for each student.

No medication of any kind can be administered to any child without the appropriate completed permission form – Authority to Administer Medication.

Under no circumstances should a child have medication of any kind in their school bag.

If your child requires asthma medication, an **Asthma Action Plan/Report** must be completed and provided to the school Office and the teacher must be made aware of the procedure for the administering of medication, e.g. dose and frequency of inhaler use. These forms as well as the Action Plans for Anaphylaxis and Allergic Reactions are also available from the school office. It is very important to notify the school office and the class teacher if your child has developed any allergies or has any medical issues.

Transport of Sick Children

Under no circumstances will school staff transport a sick or injured child due to safety and legal reasons. In the first instance the school will try to contact the parents/guardian to collect the child to take them to a doctor/hospital. If a situation is life threatening, the school will call an ambulance to collect the child.

If a parent is not contactable and situation is not life threatening, the school will try to contact any emergency contacts given for that child. If the emergency contacts are also not available, then the school will phone an ambulance. The cost of an ambulance will be the parents' responsibility. The school will ensure that a known adult accompanies a child in an ambulance.

Head Lice

These are a common occurrence amongst children. Please check your child regularly. The office or class teacher will notify you when there is an outbreak. Sometimes a nit-check will be carried out by staff in the classroom. If nits or head-lice are detected, we are obliged to send the affected child home. The child may return once the head lice have been treated and the teacher advised of this.

Dental Services

All students from Kindy 5 to Class 6 up are eligible for free dental therapy at Tuart Hill Dental Therapy Centre (located within Tuart Hill Primary School), Lawley Street, Tuart Hill.

Visits to our school are scheduled once a year during which time an observation is recorded. Parents wishing to access this service need to initiate this process and may call directly on 9344 1585.

Television, Videos and Electronic Games

Excessive television viewing is now widely acknowledged as being harmful for young children. Our teachers have found it to be detrimental to the curriculum aims of Steiner education and for this reason viewing of television, video and electronic games are not recommended for the children in the Kindergarten and

lower primary classes. Teachers may approach parents regarding the use of these items if they feel it is affecting students' classroom experiences.

For further information see "The Plug-in Drug" and other titles (available from the school Library) or talk to your class teacher. Electronic game players, such as Nintendo DS/Gameboys, toys, game cards, soft animals and iPod/iPads are not to be brought to school. The use of mobile phones by children at school is strictly prohibited. If it is essential that your child bring a mobile phone to school, it must be handed into Office staff for safe keeping until the end of the school day.

Emergency Information

At the beginning of every school year you will be forwarded a **Student Registration Form**. This form provides the school with updated contact information and health details.

The school requires contact details in case of emergencies. It is vitally important that parents inform the school of any allergies that their children have. In severe cases specific action may be required. This will be discussed with individual parents. **It is parent's responsibility to keep this information up to date.**

The Oval

The oval is the property of Nollamara Primary School. We have the use of the oval by specific arrangement with NPS, and only when our teachers are on duty there.

Children Climbing Trees

The 'lizard tree' may be climbed only if the class teacher has approved his/her students to climb. Soft-fall wood-chips have been laid under this tree for safety. Branches must be as thick as the child's thigh for standing on. 'Droppies' are not permitted. Children may not climb on the boundary fence. ***No other trees on school grounds may be climbed.*** Other trees and shrubs may be used for quiet play, e.g. cubbies, but not for running or chasing games or climbing. We ask that you respect all plants and trees on the property and take particular care not to damage them.

Dogs on the Premises

Health and Safety Regulations stipulate that **no** dogs (except guide dogs) are allowed on school premises at any time.

Parking

Please use only the designated parking bays on Mayfair Street, and pay close attention to parking signage. Parking is available in the Nollamara Shopping Centre carpark on Nollamara Avenue, which is only a very short walk from the school, and on Myimbar Way at the back of the school.

Please do not park in or across the driveway accessing the school oval on Myimbar Way, as this will block the arrival /departure of service vehicle access to school grounds.

Parents are not permitted to use the staff car parks on Mayfair Street or Nollamara Avenue. Please only park in designated areas as per City of Stirling regulations. Please consider the comfort of residents during school drop off and pick up times.

Entry to the School

Entry into the school is via the walkway on Mayfair Street and the gate leading from the oval between Kindy and the main building only. Please do not enter the school grounds via the staff car park as this poses a safety risk to pedestrians.

Personal Belongings & Lost Property

The school cannot be responsible for items of value that are brought to school unnecessarily. Valuable items that are brought in for educational purposes must be stored in the places provided and at your own risk.

In the event of lost property, please check with the Office or look in the lost property box located outside Gumnut Kindy. At the end of each term, any uncollected items will be donated to charity.

2. EVALUATION OF CHILD'S PROGRESS

Teachers keep ongoing records and evaluations of the work and behaviour of the children, both in terms of our aims as a Steiner school and in accordance with governmental requirements. An interview between the teacher and parent/s takes place in the latter part of second term. The end of year written report provides a comprehensive outline of the class and the child's progress during the year. A shorter written interim report is provided mid-year or a teacher may offer a home visit.

3. ENROLMENT POLICY

Enrolment is subject to places being available. When there are a limited number of places available in Kindergarten and the primary school, preference will be given to children with a sibling at the school and to children who are transferring from another Steiner school.

All other applications received will be prioritised by date and must be accompanied with the supporting documentation and application fee. Class dynamics and student needs are taken into careful consideration when places are offered.

There is a one term trial period for all new students. At the end of the trial period the enrolment will be reviewed to determine if the student has successfully integrated into the school and to determine if the enrolment should continue.

Continued enrolment is subject to meeting the terms and conditions set out in the school fee and school fee collection policies. Your child's place may be at risk if you fail to pay your school fees.

Continued enrolment is subject to abiding by all the school policies (including amended policies) at all times.

4. ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Department of Education and Training is now overseeing enrolment and attendance requirements according to *The School Education Act 1999* and *School Education Regulations 2000* in both public and private schools.

It is a legal obligation for parents to send children to school, except in the case of sickness, or in special circumstances where the prior approval of the teacher has been given. WCSS is required to refer non-attendance and habitual lateness to a School Attendance Panel.

Setting aside the legal obligations, your child's progress is affected by their parent's attitude to school; a responsible attitude to regular attendance at school will have a positive effect.

Equally, inconsistent attendance may lead to the following:

- The child experiencing gaps in knowledge which are compounded by further absences;
 - Any learning difficulties the child may be experiencing may be difficult to detect;
 - Unsettled behaviour because the child is unaware of what the rest of the class has covered;
 - Difficulty for the child in being confident in their place in their peer group;
 - The perception to the child of low regard for the importance of school.
-
- Please give careful consideration when planning holidays or absences from school to minimise disruption to your child's education.

Long term family holidays are discouraged. The School Administrator must be advised as home schooling is an exemption under the Schools Education Act.

Attendance at excursions, camps, school festivals and fairs, and performances are part of the curriculum and are not optional.

Where attendance is inconsistent, the class teacher will talk to the parents concerned and seek to address any underlying issues. In the event of the situation continuing, the College of Teachers will meet with the parents to discuss the matter. Continued sporadic attendance will be deemed to indicate a lack of support on behalf of the family, and the child's enrolment may be reviewed.

5. PRIVATE TUTORING DURING SCHOOL HOURS

Students must undertake their private tutoring, if needed, outside of school hours.

Educational programs delivered by private tutors or external professionals during school hours are deemed by the College of Teachers to have educational value only when:

- They comply with Departmental and school attendance policy (minimum attendance requirements)
- Are at the discretion of the class teacher in communication with the College of Teachers
- Are programs that enhance the quality of programs offered by the school for the benefit of individual students
- Are consistent with the school's philosophy
- The provider is not a teacher at WCSS

Parents need to be aware that such arrangements can have an impact on a teacher's mandated role as educator. Please arrange to meet with your teacher and WCSS Learning Support so the matter can be thoroughly discussed. A formal written agreement between the school and the student's parents would need to be arranged.

6. FEE POLICY

The full Fee Policy is available at the WCSS website and at the school Office. Below is a summary of relevant sections of the policy:

Payment Terms

- Accounts will be sent out no later than the last week of the previous term;
- Payment is due by the end of Week 1 of each term;
- If payment is not received by this date, a late payment fee will apply (as per approved fee schedule). The first late payment charge will apply after Week 3 of each term;

- An application for a sibling, Centrelink discount or financial assistance must be submitted by the end of the second week of term. Failure to submit prior to the cut-off date will result in a late fee being applied to the account;
- WCSS uses a collection agency for recovery of overdue accounts at the debtor's expense;
- The school reserves the right to withdraw the enrolment of a student due to unpaid school fees. For full details regarding overdue accounts please refer to the Debt Collection Policy;
- The school offers payment plans to assist families to pay off fees over the school year. This must be done via Ezidebit. The school Finance Officer is happy to help you set this up.

Refunds

Refunds will not be given under any circumstances unless an overpayment has been made compared to the full school fees (Default family discounts only).

Payment Methods

Options for payment methods are:

- Cash or cheque (via school Office)
- EFTPOS, Credit Card (a 2.5% surcharge will apply to all credit card transactions unless you are paying fees for the full year)
- Direct Deposit (Electronic Funds Transfer) to:
BSB: 633 000
Acct No: 132 717 638
(NB: to use this method you must be paying term by term or for the year, and it must be paid by the due date)
- Ezidebit payment plan.

Payment Plans

A payment plan may be negotiated. There are two kinds of payment plan available:

- Regular Payment Plan – Payments may be spread evenly across the term or year. These are not means tested, but must be applied for by the end of week 2 each term. An application form is available from the office. The terms of this payment plan may be assessed at the discretion of school management; however, the full year's fees must be paid by September of every school year and must be via Ezidebit only.
- Deferred Payment Plan – Negotiated as part of an Application for Financial Assistance or debt collection. If the full year's fees are not able to be finalised in the current year, or there are outstanding fees from the

previous year, a deferred plan may be negotiated. This needs to be applied for in writing.

- Further details of payment plans are available from the office.

Notice of Withdrawal

One full term's notice in writing must be given prior to the withdrawal of a student from West Coast Steiner School. In default of such notice, one full term's fees (including all relevant levies for that term) will be charged and payable. Full fees will be payable for the term which the student has already commenced, regardless of the notice provided. Full term fees will be payable if a child is withdrawing part way through the term.

The notice period for Playgroup is 6 weeks prior to commencement of the following term. Withdrawal must be in writing. Failure to do so will result in a full term's fees being payable.

If a student is enrolled (i.e. acceptance of offer and payment of enrolment fee), but never attends the school, the Term 1 fees and annual levies will still apply unless at least 6 weeks' notice is given prior to commencement. This applies to all grades and classes including Playgroup.

Late Enrolments

Tuition fees and materials levies for late enrolments are invoiced at either 100% or 50% of scheduled term fees. If a child is joining the school before the end of week 5 of each relevant term, 100% of fees will apply. If the child joins after week 5, 50% of scheduled term fees will apply. All levies (except the materials levy) will be payable for the full year regardless of when a child/family joins the school.

Long-term Absentees

Long term absentees will be required to pay full fees in order to retain a place in the school. If a child leaves the school and is enrolled again, a new application and enrolment fee may apply at the discretion of school management. This will be guided by the length of absence from the school and family association with the school (e.g. other siblings still attending the school).

Overseas/Non-Resident Students

Fees and Conditions for International Students are available from the School Office.

Discounts

These discounts form part of the school's fee policy.

Family Discounts

Discounts may apply to children from the same family from the Kindy 4 through to Class 6. For the purposes of the fee policy, a family is defined as “children residing in the same household for equal to or more than 30% of each year and being billed to the same person(s).” Family discounts do not apply to Playgroup families.

Default Family Discounts

All students are billed as “full fee students” and **you are required to apply for sibling discounts.**

Self-Assessed Need - Sibling Discounts

To make Steiner education more accessible for large families, a self-assessed need discount application form will need to be submitted (non-means tested). To claim the discount, an election needs to be made in writing to the school. No evidence needs to be supplied. A self-assessed need sibling discount form is available from the school Office.

The self-assessed need form must be received no later than the end of the second week of term. Families may apply for self-assessed need discount for up to a calendar year at a time, but not into the following year.

The self-assessed need sibling discounts are:

- Second Child – 20% tuition fee discount
- Third Child and subsequent children – 75% tuition discount

Concession Card Discounts

Families who provide a valid concession card, which is not expiring before the end of the relevant term, may apply for a 10% discount which will not be means tested. This discount applies to students from Kindy 4 to Class 6 and may be used in conjunction with self-assessed need sibling discounts.

Discounts do not apply to Kindy Care and only apply to Playgroup students where there is a sibling in Kindy or Primary.

All discounts apply only to the tuition fee only. No discounts apply to any levies including the materials levy, association membership or infrastructure levy.

After all discounts have been applied, a new invoice will be supplied to the family for clarity.

7. DISCIPLINE IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Overriding Premise

Everyone has a right to feel valued and be treated as a person of worth. Everyone has a right to be safe at school. We aim to work together in the freedom of equal opportunity while respecting the rights of others.

Aim

As a Steiner school, we aim to resolve most situations using creative discipline with young children. With the older children a more direct process is sometimes more appropriate.

In our school, we aim to guide children to develop a positive self-discipline based on understanding and appreciation of others' needs, rights and feelings. In doing this, each child's individual experiences and developmental level will be considered by the staff.

Each child has the right to receive the benefits of the school without interference or disruption.

Implementation

Staff members strive to use positive techniques of gentle guidance, redirection and reinforcement rather than promoting competition, comparison, or criticism. It is intended that consistent, clear guidelines will be used by all the adults working with the children. Staff strive to use discipline that does not rely on arbitrary punishment, and explanations will be appropriate to the age and understanding of the child.

The staff will endeavour to:

- Employ consequences which have a connection to the mistaken behaviour;
- Ensure the environment is well prepared so that problems are anticipated and prevented;
- Be aware of each child's individual developmental level and needs;
- Create a balance of quiet and vigorous activities;
- Model appropriate and desirable behaviours;
- Use stories as a therapeutic tool to assist specific situations or temperaments, so that a child or children will realise that there are alternative ways to respond;
- Avoid rewarding undesirable behaviours;
- Encourage children to respect the rights and needs of others;
- Empower and support children to resolve their own conflicts;

- Encourage parents to tell the teacher if their child is complaining about being bullied by other children;
- Work for the development in the children of the effective use of language, so that they are empowered to explore and express their reactions verbally and appropriately, rather than by acting out or withdrawing;
- Help children to resolve to do better, rather than instilling lasting regret;
- Make use of Issue or Incident Report forms and Student Observation Records as appropriate;
- Work with parents on setting limits and positive reinforcement. It is supportive for young children to have consistent behaviour management practices at school and home. When the staff have ongoing concerns it will be important for the child's progress for teachers and parents to have frequent and honest communication.

Dealing with Inappropriate or Bullying Behaviours

Unacceptable behaviour includes:

- Fighting, kicking, hitting, pushing, rough play
- Habitual bullying
- Verbal abuse
- Unfair play
- Disrupting the teaching or the learning of other children
- Throwing objects
- Violent behaviour
- Rudeness
- Exclusion/cliques

As appropriate, staff will apply some or all of the following classroom practices designed to help prevent negative situations from developing further:

- Stop the behaviour;
- Acknowledge the child's feelings;
- Explain why the actions are inappropriate;
- Gently encourage and redirect the child's behaviour;
- Support children in finding their own solutions to conflicts;
- Implement a quiet time or a "time-in" working with an adult;
- Repeat the rule, e.g. "Hands are for work and for play";
- Encourage the child to express regret by some form of reparation such as saying sorry, drawing a picture, or taking water or a tissue to a child who is hurt;
- Close supervision of outside play;
- Reinforce appropriate sense of care and use of equipment;
- Ensure that both the child who bullies and the child who is the victim feel like they are a valued member of the school by using long and short term strategies;
- Through ongoing storytelling, correction and guidance, educate victims as well as bullies to healthier modes of behaviour;

- Discuss situations and hold interviews with parents informally and formally;
- In some instances, we will send a child home for the rest of the day if bullying or inappropriate behaviour has been persistent over a period of time and other strategies, such as the above, have not succeeded in stopping the behaviour.

In the case of fights at school, or if a child's behaviour is persistent or poses a threat to the child's own safety, the safety of other children or staff, a threat to school property, or will prevent the ongoing conduct of classes, an attempt will be made to contact a parent immediately, with a request that the child be taken home.

Persistent Misbehaviour or Serious Offences

When there is persistent misbehaviour or a serious offence, the following steps will be taken:

Step 1

If behaviour is extreme or inappropriate, the child's parents as well as the Primary Faculty and/or College will be informed and involved in some or all of the following steps, as deemed appropriate or necessary:

- Parent interview;
- Discussion with other teachers about the child;
- Teacher observes the child and notes observations in writing;
- Another teacher observes the child;
- The child is assessed for possible contributing factors such as: hearing, speech or vision problems;
- Assessments by a paediatrician or an educational consultant may be sought.

Step 2

From the above, specific recommendations for remedial steps and expectations of behavioural change will be made. Parent support is vital.

Step 3

If there is ongoing serious disruption of the work or play of the other children, a child may be placed on probation while meetings with the parents are held and remedies are sought.

Step 4

If the above action fails to resolve the problem, or if attempts to meet with the parents have been unsuccessful and notification of the seriousness of the problem has been given to the parents in writing, then a child's enrolment may be terminated by the school.

8. GRIEVANCE POLICY

At the West Coast Steiner School, we acknowledge that differences in opinion, understanding and feelings inevitably arise in human relationships, including in schools. We strive to deal with these in a way which is helpful for all those who are involved. This applies equally to staff members, parents and students. Please understand that each situation is different and these are guidelines to assist with resolution.

Communication Difficulties, Conflicts and Grievances

We urge everyone to try to address any misunderstandings, poor communication or other incidents directly with the person involved, whether teacher, another staff member or someone else in the school community.

If aspects of the grievance still interfere with your relationship then you can fill in an Issue Form and submit it to the school office, and/or talk to the School Administrator, who will arrange a facilitated conversation to assist with the process.

This process may extend beyond one meeting and may be more or less formal depending on the situation and events under discussion.

Please see our website for the full policy.

Confidentiality

The School appreciates that personal issues must be kept confidential. Confidentiality will be maintained by the relevant member/s at all levels of the process. Confidentiality will be maintained except when disclosure may be required to relevant reviewing persons and committees.

9. PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

This Code of Conduct is intended to assist parents and to identify and resolve issues of conduct that may arise at school. It is designed to guide parents in their dealings with staff, other parents, students and the wider community. The code has been written in line the schools values and expectations.

As a school is a complex organization comprising of diversity and different relationships, it is essential that all members recognize and respect not only their own rights and responsibilities but also those of other members and those of the school itself.

As a parent, you play a formative role in the development of your child's sense of justice, equality and worth of all members of the school community. You also act as one of the most influential role models within your child's life. As the greatest capacity to reason and control their actions, parents of the school

are expected to display acceptable behavior at all times within the school setting.

We strive to develop the following:

- A non-judgmental attitude towards all people;
- An ability to understand the situation of others;
- A co-operative attitude in working with others;
- Open, positive and honest communication;
- The ability to work respectfully with other people;
- Reverence for the world;
- An appreciation of beauty;
- Trusting relationships;
- Responsible actions.

As a Parent/ Guardian we ask that you:

- Support your child in all educational endeavours by giving praise and showing interest in school activities;
- Help your child to discover that it is often the process that is experienced rather than the end product that makes it all worthwhile;
- Help your child to understand that giving of your very best is what matters rather than always comparing yourself against the capabilities of others;
- Demonstrate that both parents and teachers work together for the benefit of the child;
- Listen to your child, but remember that a different "reality" may possibly exist elsewhere;
- Support the philosophy of Steiner education;
- Understand the importance of a healthy parent/teacher/child triangle and communicate any concerns to your child's teacher in a constructive manner;
- Adhere to the school's policies;
- Co-operate where your child's behaviour has overstepped accepted school standards;
- Support the school in its efforts to maintain a positive teaching and learning environment;
- Maintain a positive and co-operative attitude.

Parent/Guardian Rights

- To be treated with respect and courtesy by other parents;
- To have confidentiality over sensitive issues respected by staff;
- To be treated in a caring and polite manner;
- To be respected by staff and students;
- To have a timely response to concerns raised;

- To be treated with professionalism from all staff members;
- To be listened to and clearly communicated with, in regard to their child's education.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

- Under no circumstances approach another child whilst in the care of the school to discuss or chastise them because of actions towards parents' own child;
- Be aware that events have many sides, be prepared to listen to them and seek to verify facts before stating a concern;
- Respect the rights of staff members and other individuals;
- Respect the reputation of teachers and administrators and kindly be mindful of communications;
- Follow the correct procedures to resolve a grievance or conflict;
- Follow any reasonable instructions given by a staff member;
- Respect teachers' preparation time before school and make an appointment at a mutually convenient time if you wish to speak to a teacher -please do not expect a meeting before school unless pre-arranged;
- Do not discuss any grievances in front of your child regarding the school; attempt to converse only with the person/s involved, and avoid unnecessary involvement of the general school community. Concerns of a general nature are more appropriate for other school forums such as administration or Council;
- On excursions, helping in class or on camps, parents must follow the instructions and wishes of the teacher. A parent may remind students of the rules but at no time issue consequences.

10. USE OF SCHOOL GROUNDS AND BUILDINGS

The school rooms are available to groups wishing to hold workshops or meetings. The following guidelines apply:

- The workshop or meeting is in sympathy with, or related to Steiner education or anthroposophy;
- The workshop or meeting is approved by the College or school management;
- The holder of the workshop or meeting takes responsibility for care and set-up of the venue and returns the venue to its original state and set-up (i.e. the room is clean and furniture is returned to the correct place);
- The cleaner on duty for that day or days is informed of the use of the venue and the times when it will be used;
- The holder of the group or workshop takes responsibility for ensuring that the group doesn't interfere with school activities or other activities taking place at the same time in the school;

- Payment for the use of the venue shall be by donation to the school building fund or as determined annually by the School Administrator.

11. PRIVACY POLICY

West Coast Steiner School collects, holds, uses and manages personal information in accordance with this policy. The policy complies with the National Privacy Principles contained in the Commonwealth Privacy Act.

If you would like further information about the way the school implements this policy and manages the personal information it holds, please contact the School Administrator.

Photographs

West Coast Steiner School requires written consent from parents prior to using images of students for any external publications. Consent is included on the Student Enrolment Form and is updated annually. If you choose to withdraw your authorisation please notify the school.



12. HEALTH AND SAFETY

We seek to provide an environment that is pleasant and safe for all children, parents, staff and all those who come onto our school grounds. The Grounds and Maintenance Coordinator will attend to preventative maintenance and daily maintenance matters. Any injuries or accidents that occur on school grounds, including those that occur outside school hours, must be reported as soon as possible to teachers or administration staff. You may be asked to fill out an Incident Report.

13. EVACUATION AND LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES

If a fire is discovered, or for any other reason the building must be evacuated:

1. The alarm bell is rung. The alarm bell is in the first aid room.
2. A responsible adult in each room begins sounding the classroom whistle or delegates someone else to sound it.
3. The teachers line up students and walk them single file to the assembly area, making sure that all students are accounted for. Teachers will take roll books with them.
4. As soon as two teachers are at the assembly area with their students, one will leave his/her students in the care of the other and return to check the toilets.
5. The office staff or designated staff/school fire warden will telephone the Kindy building, the fire brigade or other appropriate emergency service, and Nollamara Primary School before leaving the building. If this is not feasible, the staff will use a mobile telephone or go to the Nollamara Primary School to use the telephone there. A staff member will be sent to Kindy to assist with their evacuation.
6. The office staff or designated staff/fire warden will bring a first aid kit and the Essential Information file.
7. This evacuation procedure is to be practised at school on a regular basis to ensure familiarity with the procedure.
8. The assembly area is on the grass near the front oval and classes assemble as their teachers direct. If Kindy students are unable to get to the designated assembly area, an approved alternative is the oval or the Kindy carpark.

