



# Family Handbook

2019-2020

Bayou Village School

3701 Hardy St, Houston TX 77009

[info@bayouvillageschool.org](mailto:info@bayouvillageschool.org) | 713-864-2452

## **Mission**

In an environment that embraces the beauty of nature and cultivates respect for it, Bayou Village School prepares children to meet the challenges of our world and the future with clarity of thought, a caring heart, and the confidence to initiate change.

## **Privacy and Use Notice**

This directory is provided as a service to the community members of Bayou Village School for their sole personal and school use. Directory information is not to be used or shared for any other purpose.

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# Faculty and Staff

Direct communication with your teacher via Living Tree messages is the preferred method of contact, though contact via the school email addresses listed below as well as phone messages or notes left with the Office Assistant are also appropriate.

## Early Childhood

### Toddler Classrooms

Sweet Peas                      10 - 18 mo      Lead: Jessica Almazan  
Assistant: Merari Linares  
Assistant: Taylor Mosser

Email: [jessica.almazan@bayouvillageschool.org](mailto:jessica.almazan@bayouvillageschool.org)

Poppies                              18 mo -              Lead: Katlyn Lester  
2 years                              Assistant: Daphne Vargas  
Assistant: Ashley Martinez

Email: [katlyn.lester@bayouvillageschool.org](mailto:katlyn.lester@bayouvillageschool.org)

### Preschool Classrooms

Sunflowers                      2-3 years              Lead: Mimi Estrada  
Assistant: Sophia Lopez  
Assistant: Courtney Blackeney

Email: [mimi.estrada@bayouvillageschool.org](mailto:mimi.estrada@bayouvillageschool.org)

Honeysuckles                      2-3 years              Lead: Elizabeth Rojas  
Assistant: Tamara Lichtenstein  
Assistant: Leticia Barrios

Email: [elizabeth.rojas@bayouvillageschool.org](mailto:elizabeth.rojas@bayouvillageschool.org)

## Mixed Kindergarten Classrooms

Water Lilies      3-6 years      Lead: Rachel Muehlmann  
Asst.: Jessi Cain

Email: [rachel.muehlmann@bayouvillageschool.org](mailto:rachel.muehlmann@bayouvillageschool.org)

Morning Glories      3-6 years      Lead: Erica Ormanovich  
Assistant: Noemi Perez

Email: [erica.ormanovich@bayouvillageschool.org](mailto:erica.ormanovich@bayouvillageschool.org)

Moonflowers      3-6 years      Lead: Jenna Arbogast  
Assistant: Andi Fogel

Email: [jenna.arbogast@bayouvillageschool.org](mailto:jenna.arbogast@bayouvillageschool.org)

## Grades One through Five

**Grade 1**      Bharathi Gunasekaran

Email: [Bharathi.Gunasekaran@bayouvillageschool.org](mailto:Bharathi.Gunasekaran@bayouvillageschool.org)

**Grades 2**      Marcada Claybon

Email: [marcada.claybon@bayouvillageschool.org](mailto:marcada.claybon@bayouvillageschool.org)

**Grade 3/4**      Andrea Saucedo

Email: [andrea.saucedo@bayouvillageschool.org](mailto:andrea.saucedo@bayouvillageschool.org)

**Grade 5**      Natasha Bashir

Email: [natasha.bashir@bayouvillageschool.org](mailto:natasha.bashir@bayouvillageschool.org)

# Faculty and Staff continued

## Subject Teachers

**Eurythmy**

Marine Kojanyan

Email: mkojanyan@gmail.com

**Games**

Email:

**Handwork**

Tatiana Gvishh

Email: mononoavare@gmail.com

**Music**

Email:

**Spanish**

Rebecca Murillo

Email: azarebe7@gmail.com

**Violin**

Kana Kimura

Email: ciociochan@yahoo.com

**Woodworking**

Email:

## Extended Care

<b>Extended Care Contact</b>	
Chloe Williams	713-864-2452
<b>After Care</b>	713-864-2452
	Email:
	Email:

## Administration

<b>Administrative Director</b> Email: info@bayouvillageschool.org	Chloe Williams
<b>Enrollment Director</b> Email: enroll@bayouvillageschool.org	Maryoceane Guy
<b>Office Assistant</b> Email: natalie.beasley@bayouvillageschool.org	Natalie Beasley

## Other Important Emails

<b>Board of Directors</b>	BoD@bayouvillageschool.org
<b>College of Teachers</b>	CoT@bayouvillageschool.org
<b>Parent Community Council</b>	PCC@bayouvillageschool.org



# **School Governance**

Bayou Village School is an independent, collaboratively-led private school. The primary governing bodies are: the Board of Directors, the Administration, the College of Teachers, and the Parent Community Council.

These entities maintain confidentiality in all matters relating to the individual children, financial aid allocation, and all other personal and private matters.

## **Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors is responsible for the legal operation of the school, budgeting and fiscal management, long-term strategic planning, resource allocation, and fundraising. The Board holds the Administration and Faculty responsible for accomplishing the school's mission and goals. The Board consists of parent representatives, community members at large, and our Administrative Director.

The aim for the Board is to unite people who have a strong interest in helping the school develop and whose skills complement one another in order to provide the leadership needed for the school to prosper.

The Board of Directors meets bi-monthly. These meetings are announced via Living Tree, and the minutes of the meetings are posted on Living Tree and are available at the school. Due to confidentiality concerns, only a portion of each Board of Directors meeting is open to the public.

## **Board of Directors**

### **Officers**

Board President, Dagmar Truckses

### **Ex-Officio**

Administrative Director, Chloe Williams

### **Board Members at Large**

Marietta Clewing, Katie Tai

### **Non-voting Representatives**

College of Teachers Representative, rotating member

Parent Community Council (PCC) Officer

## **Administration**

The Administration is responsible for the daily operation of the school. The administrators oversee the facilities and grounds, employees, admissions, enrollment, marketing, day-to-day financial bookkeeping, and communications. The Administration implements the policies set and approved by the Board and holds the Faculty accountable for fulfilling the teaching mission of the school.

## **College of Teachers**

The College of Teachers is a subset of classroom teachers. These teachers, working with the full Faculty of assistants, specialty teachers, and extended care teachers, bring life to the mission of the school through teaching, curriculum development, the celebration of festivals, professional development, peer evaluation and mentoring, parent-teacher conferences, and parent education. The College of Teachers provides input on teacher selection and overall strategic planning, and develops and breathes life into the culture of the school.

# Parent Community Council (PCC)

All parents/guardians of enrolled students are automatically members of the PCC and are invited to participate.

## PCC Officers

President, *Tiffany Mensing*, ([PCC@bayouvillageschool.org](mailto:PCC@bayouvillageschool.org))

Vice President, *Marylynn Gomez*

Secretary, *Jane Bueso*

Parent Education, *Elena Magallanes*

Community Outreach, *Kevin Burns*

PCC aide, *Sabali Watkins*, *Sam Ocean*

The mission of the Parent Community Council is to nurture and grow the parent community, support the Faculty and Administration, strengthen communication, and organize volunteer efforts.

By becoming involved with the PCC, parents can learn more about the school, discuss ways to strengthen the school community, and share in the challenges of parenting.

## The PCC is:

- A catalyst for parent initiatives
- A facilitator to enhance parents' communication within each class, as well as within the school, its community, and its governing bodies; and
- A place where parents can become more deeply involved in the life of the school through volunteer efforts.

## **Class Parent**

A Class Parent is a volunteer that supports activities and events at the school. Class Parents assist the class teacher and the class, by serving as a conduit of information between the class and the wider school community. Class Parents regularly attend PCC meetings and help nurture and create a community among the parents of their particular class by initiating class specific activities and organizing and facilitating parent involvement in all-school activities.

# **Volunteerism and Parent Involvement**

Our school believes that volunteerism builds and strengthens empathy, wisdom, confidence, courage, and a whole host of beneficial attributes in all people, but especially in children. Many opportunities are made available throughout the school year for parents to set the example for their child.

## **Family Work Hours**

The successful operation of our small school relies largely on help given by parent volunteers. Each family is expected to contribute to the school by volunteering a minimum of 20 hours during the school year. There are many wonderful ways to share your time and energy. Please consult your child's teacher, the Administration, and the PCC representatives for ideas or upcoming opportunities.

If a family is unable to meet the volunteer commitment, we will gladly accept a donation of \$500 per school year, in lieu of the time.

## **Family Participation**

The Faculty, Administration, and Board of Directors wholeheartedly agree that parent involvement is crucial for the continued growth of the Bayou Village School community.

Parents are expected to actively participate in the collective task of building and developing Bayou Village School and in the specific goal of helping their children to fully develop their capacities. We count the attendance at parent-teacher conferences, at festivals, at class meetings, and at school events among the most critical forms of participation.

## **Fundraising**

Bayou Village School works on fundraising initiatives throughout the year. Company matching is a common program at many companies and is welcomed enthusiastically by the school. Please talk with our Administration about this opportunity. If you have a connection to a foundation and would like the school to submit a proposal, the Administration would like to help.

Bayou Village School hosts an annual Gala fundraiser to support the BVS mission of making Waldorf education an accessible part of the Houston community. Families, local businesses, and the community are encouraged to get involved by sponsoring, contributing to our auction, and attending the event.

# Class Lists

## Sweet Peas Toddler Class

Ms. Jessica Almazan, Ms. Merari Linares and Ms. Taylor Mosser

Samuel  
Liam  
Olivia  
Ada  
Elliott  
Juniper  
Dafne  
Emmy  
Isla  
Rowen  
Abel  
Franklin  
George  
Gerard  
Sage  
Sofia  
Rex

# Poppy Flowers Preschool Classroom

Ms. Katlyn Lester, Ms. Daphne Vargas and Ms. Ashley Martinez

Livia  
Malin  
Maya  
Oliver  
(Henry) East  
(John) JW  
Nolan  
Finn  
Isaac  
Remy  
Freyja  
Marley  
Elliott  
Stanislaw  
Sloane  
Rollo  
Nova  
(Charles) Stellan  
Irene

# **Sunflowers Preschool Classroom:**

**Ms. Mimi Estrada, Ms. Sofia Lopez and Ms. Courtney Blackeney**

Rielynn  
Luna  
Gautham  
Jax  
Hannah  
Carson  
Kamaria  
Ailey  
Tomas  
Mathilda  
Rine  
Riya  
Frederik  
Paloma  
Miller  
Carl  
Esther



# **Honeysuckles Preschool Classroom:**

Ms. Elizabeth Rojas, Ms. Tamara Lichtenstein and Ms. Leticia Barrios

Riviera  
(Roberto) Robbie  
Lucy  
Jonah  
Hudson  
Annabelle  
Jane  
Carys  
Mateo  
Rhea  
William  
Theodore  
Penelope  
Freya  
(Katherine) Taylor  
Conner  
Margaret

**Morning Glories Classroom:**  
**Ms. Erica Ormanovich And Ms. Noemi Garza**

Jack  
Carine  
Sophia  
Declan  
Mateo  
Rijk  
Logan  
Lucia  
Ibsah  
Celeste  
Sebastian  
Ian  
Shepherd  
Siggy  
Theo  
Yvonne  
Lane  
Bruno  
Ellie

# **Moonflowers Mixed Kindergarten Classroom:**

**Ms. Jenna Arbogast And Ms. Andi Fogel**

Norah  
Stanley  
Sebastian  
Zenan  
Audrey  
Thomas  
Christine  
Jensen  
Bodhi  
Blythe  
Jacob  
Zelda  
Mayuka

**Water Lilies Mixed Kindergarten Classroom:**

**Ms. Rachel Muehlmann and Ms. Jessi Cain**

Katherine

Erik

Rowan

Samuel

Seth

Greyson

Louis

Austin

Oslo

Eleanor

Mateo

Kalel

Poppy

# Grade 1: Ms. Bharathi Gunasekaran

Aria  
Luca  
Addison  
Syed  
Vinzent  
Eloise  
James  
Francis  
Michael  
Sunny  
Aryana  
Olivia

## **Grade 2: Ms. Marcada Claybon**

Ryan  
Lucas  
Carmelo  
Simon  
Coco  
Grant  
Ella

## **Grades 3 & 4: Ms. Andrea Saucedo**

Baxter  
Emi  
Francis  
Zai  
Ethan

## **Grade 5: Ms. Natasha Bashir**

Zachary  
Lotus  
Alec  
Adrian  
Iris  
Catalina  
Paulina  
Lucas  
Rosslyn

# **A Family Guide to** **Bayou Village School**

## **School Policies and Information**

### **School Hours**

All classrooms open at 8:30 AM

9:00 AM - 12:30 PM, Half-day Early Childhood

9:00 AM - 3:00 PM, Full-day Early Childhood

8:45 AM - 2:45 PM, Grades students

### **Office Hours**

8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Voicemail messages may be left and emails sent at anytime.

### **Extended Care Hours**

Before Care: 7:15 AM - 8:30 AM

Aftercare: 3:15 PM - 6:00 PM

### **Attendance**

Regular attendance is a vital element of the academic and social success of each child. Children who arrive late disrupt the established rhythm of the day with their arrival. Please make every effort to be on time and to minimize trips, appointments, and special events that require missing school. If your child is expected to arrive late or leave early, please contact the school. If your child will be absent, please notify the school before 8:45 AM. As stated in the enrollment agreement, grades students with a total of 10

absences for the school year (either full day or due to late arrivals) will be required to repeat the grade.

### **Arrivals and Departures**

Drop off and pick up times are very busy. Please drive very slowly. Stay with your children at all times in the parking lot and do not leave them unattended in a vehicle. To best protect the children, and to keep things running smoothly, please follow these guidelines.

### **Exit Doors**

The Exit door at the end of the Preschool/Toddler hallway and the Exit gate from the playground to the parking lot must remain closed during morning drop off and during school hours for children's safety.

### **Morning Drop off**

Classrooms open at 8:30 AM. Children arriving before 8:25 and left unchaperoned will be automatically enrolled in Before Care. Preschool and Toddler children should be walked to their classroom or to Before Care by the adult bringing them to school. Kinder and Grades students should be escorted to the playground after dropping their belongings off in the classroom.

Grades students arriving after 9:00 AM must report to the Office Assistant, Natalie Beasley. Three (3) late arrivals will count as an absence from school. Parents of students with 3 late arrivals will be called in for a meeting to work out a plan to assure timely arrival. As stated above and in the enrollment agreement, students with a total of 10 absences for the school year (either full day or due to late arrivals) will be required to repeat the grade.



## **Afternoon Pick up**

Children are supervised by Faculty until 3:15 PM, but may be picked up starting at 3:00 PM. Any child remaining after 3:15 will be automatically enrolled in Aftercare. Aftercare drop-ins are tallied, and an invoice will be issued. If someone other than you will be picking up your child, they must be pre-authorized, present a photo ID, and be given a Visitor Pass.

To pre-authorize a person to pick up your child or to add them to your child's pick up list indefinitely, please send an email with the person's full name, your child's name, and your full name. This email should be sent to both the Administration and your child's teacher prior to pick up. Students will not be allowed to leave the building with any person without this authorization from a parent or guardian, regardless of their relationship to the child or their familiarity with the staff.

## **Early Childhood**

Preschool and Toddler children wait in their classrooms with their teachers until they are released to a parent or authorized person, while kinder students may be picked up from the playground or classroom.

## **Grades**

Drive-through pick-up is available for eligible grades students from 2:45 until 3:00 PM. These students will be released directly into the vehicle of a parent or authorized person. After 3:00, these students must be picked up from the playground. Grades students ineligible for drive-through pick-up may be picked up from the playground at 2:45.

Eligible grades students are those:

- who are not enrolled in Aftercare
- without siblings enrolled in Early Childhood classes

### **Extended Care**

The school runs a supervised before and after-school program. Before Care is offered from 7:15-8:30 AM. Aftercare is offered from 3:15-6:00 PM. Registration and billing information is available on the school's website.

### **Parking Lot**

Parents are welcome to park in the school's lot when dropping off or picking up their children. Please follow the one-way flow of traffic, and make use of the handicapped spaces ONLY if you have a handicapped decal. Please be respectful and aware when entering/leaving as there are many small children and our utmost duty is to keep them safe. Please be sure to lock your car and take any valuables with you. Though there is video surveillance of the parking lot, the school is not responsible for lost or stolen property.

### **School Closings**

BVS closes when weather conditions pose a significant potential hazard to life and safety. We often follow the lead of the Houston Independent School District (HISD) when determining closings due to inclement weather.

School closings will be broadcast to the community on the Living Tree website, and through a text message blast. Additionally, the voicemail system of the school will be updated to reflect the closure.

In extreme circumstances, a phone relay may be used to ensure all families are notified of important closings.



# Daily Necessities

## Three Basics for a Happy School Experience

To fully embrace the school, their education, and their development, there are three basic elements that prepare a child for a full, active day:

- **Being Well Fed:** It is essential your child has breakfast either before coming to school, or, if arriving prior to 8:45, while at school. Before care students and those children arriving before 8:45 are welcome to bring their breakfast to eat at school. Children's bodies work differently than adult bodies; they require nutritious foods more regularly because they do not store glycogen, as adults do. Thus they must eat every two hours or so throughout the day. We strive to maintain this during the school day with designated snacks that the children help prepare, and a healthy lunch provided from home.
- **Being Well Rested:** It is important that your child gets enough rest each night. An early bedtime ensures that your child will have the energy and enthusiasm to be at school.
- **Being Well Clothed:** Your child should be dressed appropriately. Aim for comfortable, sturdy clothing. Our curriculum includes the direct experience of nature. Children are outside every day for at least 50 minutes and sometimes up to 4 hours in all kinds of weather. Please ensure your child is dressed appropriately for the day's weather. There is no bad weather, only inappropriate clothing!

## **Clothing/Dress Code**

We seek to preserve the wonder and innocence of childhood while supporting young people in developing the will, compassion, and intellect to serve and respond to the world around them. This is best accomplished when children are not preoccupied with appearances and can abandon themselves to the task of becoming a friend, neighbor, citizen, and thinker. To that end, our school has a plain-clothes dress code. Students' dress and appearance should be age-appropriate, free of media characters (examples: Mickey Mouse, Little Mermaid, Darth Vader, Thomas the Train, etc.), and should reflect:

- Neatness, cleanliness, modesty
- Appropriateness for weather and activities
- Respect for self and others

Clothing such as short shorts, spaghetti straps, and short skirts without shorts or leggings underneath are NOT appropriate for an average school day.

## **Festival Attire**

Although sturdy clothing is appropriate for school, special occasions call for special dress. For festivals and performances, the Faculty will designate, in advance, how students should be dressed for each event.

## **School Supplies**

Every student is expected to have:

1. **Slippers:** Lightweight, flexible-soled, plain, soft shoes or slippers that hug the foot for inside play.
2. **Sunhat:** A hat to be worn outdoors during autumn and spring that is comfortable to wear.
3. **Full rain gear:** Head-to-toe rain gear (boots, hat, long jacket/coat or a jacket and pants combination) to protect the child on rainy days.

4. **Change of clothing:** For a variety of reasons, your child may require a change of clothing (including socks and underwear). Please place the spare clothing in a labeled, plastic zip lock bag to be stored at the school.
5. **Nap supplies** (full day Early Childhood students): A 19" x 15" nap mat and small blanket for nap time. A small stuffed animal or lovie (non-media oriented) is permitted, of course.

The above list of items will be stored at the school unless in need of cleaning. Please label everything you bring to school with your child's name to avoid confusion and loss. The nap mat will be sent home weekly for cleaning; the other items as needed.

### **Lunch & Snacks**

Please send a healthy, nutritious lunch from home. No refrigeration is available, in which case lunchbox ice packs can be helpful to preserve food. Food that is to be eaten warm should preferably be sent in a thermos, however teachers are able to heat up food that is brought in a microwave-safe container, if needed. A healthy lunch would include ample food to sustain your child throughout their day. We suggest including fruits, vegetables, and a protein/carbohydrate source (deli meat sandwich, for instance). These three items are typically sufficient for a complete meal.

**Please do not send candy, gum, soda, fruit juices, food coloring, highly processed foods, foods high in refined sugar, chocolate, or "junk" food, as these are not allowed at Bayou Village School, even during birthday celebrations.**

Send lunches in a media image-free basket or lunch box/bag. Reusable food containers are ecologically sound and reinforce our message of respect for natural resources. Thermoses and other containers should also adhere to our media-free philosophy.

As part of the daily rhythm of the class, Early Childhood students help prepare a healthy mid-morning snack with their teacher. Please ask your child's teacher for the weekly snack rhythm and address any dietary needs/restrictions for your child.

Grades students should bring a nutritious morning snack from home, and all students enrolled in Aftercare should bring an afternoon snack from home.

## What NOT to Bring to School

Please be sure your children do not bring toys or other play things, purses, cough drops, candy, gum, lip balm, or other treasures of any kind to the school. Children love to exchange treasures with one another, but it is better if this activity takes place in your home with your approval.

We do encourage children to bring little gifts from nature for the nature table in their classroom.

Bayou Village School maintains a "zero tolerance" policy toward weapons on campus. Students are not permitted to bring or use the following items on campus, except as provided by the school and used under the direct supervision of a teacher: fire igniting equipment such as matches, lighter, or lighter fuels; aerosols; flammable

substances; weapons or toys such as knives or guns. You are not permitted to bring or use any illegal items or substances on campus.

Additionally, Bayou Village School extends this zero tolerance policy to all weapons, defined as any object, device or instrument designed as a weapon or through its use is capable of threatening or producing bodily harm or which may be used to inflict self-injury including, but not limited to, any firearm, whether loaded or unloaded; airguns; pellet guns; BB guns. Devices or instruments having the appearance of a weapon including, but not limited to, weapons listed above which are broken or nonfunctional, look-alike guns; toy guns; and any object that is a facsimile of a real weapon. Knives, belts, combs, pencils, files, scissors, etc. shall be considered weapons if they are used to inflict bodily harm and/or intimidate and such use will be treated as the possession and use of a weapon.

## **Health and Safety**

We value the health and safety of all our students, Faculty, staff, and parents. To help us safeguard our children, it is important to follow the policies outlined in this section.

### **Illness**

Children must stay home for the following:

Chickenpox

Fever

Strep Throat

Diarrhea

Vomiting

Pink eye



Lice

Rash

Persistent cough

Opaque runny nose

Other infectious condition

Children may return to school once they have been **free of the illness or condition for 24 hours**. In the case of chickenpox, children may return when all spots have dry scabs. Please notify the Office Assistant if your child is diagnosed with any contagious or transmittable illness so we may notify others, if necessary.

### **Illness at School**

If a child develops a fever of 100 degrees F, or greater, vomits, has two or more instances of diarrhea, or is too sick to participate in class, his/her parents will be notified. S/he may rest in the front office until a parent or another adult arrives to take the child home. A sick child must be picked up within 30 minutes of notification of their illness.

### **Medication**

The school staff is not permitted to administer any medicine. Parents and guardians are solely responsible for giving their child needed medications. Topical or homeopathic treatments also fall under this policy. *Do not send medications to school without informing the school administrators.* Please note that exceptions will be made in the case of emergency situations, such as allergic reaction and the need for use of an epi-pen.

### **Injury**

Written consent at the time of enrollment allows the school staff to administer basic medical care in the event of minor injuries such as scraped knees, bruises, or scratches.

In the event of a medical emergency, the school will notify the parents, and will take the child to a hospital emergency service as necessary.

### **Immunizations**

Each and every child must have completed health and immunization forms in the office prior to being admitted. This is a requirement of the county health department and Texas state law. Two exemptions exist based on Texas state law:

1. Medical exemption in which a licensed physician certifies in writing that an immunization may be detrimental to a person's health
2. Reasons of conscience

Families must submit a written and notarized statement declaring their beliefs and opposition to the immunization requirements, after which the child may attend school without presenting certification of immunizations.

Information on immunization requirements can be found at the Texas Department of State Health Services ([www.dshs.state.tx.gov/immunize](http://www.dshs.state.tx.gov/immunize)). An affidavit for exemption from immunizations can be ordered online from the Texas Department of State Health Services ([webds.dshs.state.tx.gov/immco/affidavit.shtm](http://webds.dshs.state.tx.gov/immco/affidavit.shtm)).

### **Hearing and Vision Screening Requirements**

Hearing and vision screenings may be required each year. The signature of your physician and/or pediatrician is necessary. If, for some reason, you are unable to handle this with your physician and/or pediatrician, please let the school know. The Administrator will let you know in September if this is a requirement for your child.

# BVS Nut Awareness

There are several students at Bayou Village School who are seriously allergic to peanuts and tree nuts. While many students and adults have sensitivities, the students who have serious nut allergies can have an anaphylactic reaction that may require medical attention and can be life-threatening.

Families whose children have severe allergies have worked out with their child, the school and their teacher what needs to be in place during school for their child's safety, particularly in the classroom.

As a school community, we ask that you respect the school's **peanut-free policy**, and join us in being "nut aware." Please do not bring snacks and food to share in general school areas that contain any peanut ingredients and please label any food that contains other nuts (or nut oils). With conscientious labeling, the student and family can stay clear of food they should not be in contact with.

In the course of a day, many of us use nuts for protein and nourishment. In classrooms *where there are not* nut allergies, but nuts are commonly eaten, please encourage and practice excellent hand washing. If a student just ate something with nuts in it, their hands can spread the oils and some of our allergic students will react from skin contact with nuts, as well as ingestion.

Many thanks for your help and awareness.

# Communication

Open communication between home and school is essential to your child's successful and rewarding experience at school.

## Living Tree

The school contracts with an organization called Living Tree to provide a private, school community-wide forum for communication. It is via this communication tool that information for a broad audience will be disseminated, including a monthly newsletter as well as important announcements, reminders, and updates.

Parents are required to enroll in Living Tree upon receipt of invitation. There are online tutorials and parent tutorials will be scheduled to help parents familiarize themselves with and get the most out of this tool. Enabling text messaging will allow the school to notify you via text message of any emergencies, including school closures. Allowing contact information to display in the Living Tree directory will also facilitate communication between community members.

## Social Media

We also use Facebook & Instagram for posting school news, pictures, and links to educational and otherwise interesting online materials relevant to our school's community. You are encouraged, but not required, to follow us on social media! If you do not wish your child's likeness to be used in this manner, and have not specified this through TADS upon enrollment, please contact the Administration.

## Between Parent and Teacher

Our teachers are open to questions from parents and want to help when and how they can. Addressing concerns quickly and privately is of utmost importance. We ask that, in cases that may be sensitive to your family or child, a time is scheduled to meet with your child's teacher. Young children are usually kept removed from these discussions to protect their self-awareness and confidence and we ask that you respect that philosophy. Direct messages through Living Tree may be sufficient for quick questions, but a face-to-face meeting is often preferable.

During morning drop-off, if your child has had a difficult morning or slept poorly, informing their teacher will help the teacher structure a successful day for your child. It need only be brief, but having that knowledge allows the teacher to meet the challenges of the day. Further guidance regarding parent and teacher communication may be obtained from your child's teacher.

## Meetings

Class meetings occur several times throughout the academic year that enable the discussion of the year's curriculum and provide insight and answer questions about the Waldorf experience. These meetings connect parents to the school through their child's teacher. We ask that at least one member of the child's immediate family attend these meetings.

# Tracking and Reporting Student Progress

## Conferences

Parent-Teacher Conferences are the most formal way in which important communication between parent and teacher takes place. Parent-teacher conferences are mandatory. Scheduled meetings are held twice an academic year: once in the fall and once in the spring. These meetings are typically 20 to 30 minutes in length and are confidential and private. Additional conferences may be arranged as required by the needs of the student, parents, and teacher. These conferences are meant to provide feedback and guidance for an individual child to that child's parents regarding the academic, social, physical, and emotional development of the child.

## Progress Reports

All students from grades 1 through 4 receive quarterly progress report from their teacher as well as from each special subject teacher. These progress reports are compiled and used to inform the End of the Year Report which is sent home in June. As there is no formal testing, the teacher evaluates a student's progress throughout the year through recall, participation in different activities, and most importantly, the main lesson work. Progress is also communicated at parent-teacher conferences.

## Special Educational Needs

Children can have special needs, be they physical, emotional, speech, learning, or difficult family situations. Bayou Village School is committed to working with every student to the extent we are able. If you have concerns in this area, please discuss them with your child's teacher to explore available options.

## Additional School Policies

### Student Non-discrimination Policy

Bayou Village School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, gender expression, disability, sexual orientation, or national or ethnic origin in the Administration of its educational policies, enrollment, financial aid awards, or any other school-administered programs.

### Tolerance and Acceptance

Bayou Village School expects all of its community members, staff, parents, and students, to respect, accept, and appreciate the rich diversity of the world's cultures, forms of expression, and ways of being human. Discrimination against or mistreatment of community members because of difference will not be condoned.

### Diversity Statement

Bayou Village School believes that diversity enriches the school community. We respect racial, cultural, national, ethnic, physical, religious, socio-economic, political, and philosophical differences as well as differences in age,

sexual orientation, gender expression, and marital status in our students, Faculty, Administration, and families. We celebrate our individuality and encourage a climate of mutual interest and respect. Our commitment to diversity prepares our students to interact and communicate effectively with a spirit of understanding and compassion in an increasingly global society.

## Discretion

Children are impressionable, precious little imitators that do not yet have control or understanding of their emotions. To protect our students to the best of our abilities, we ask that adults and parents act with discretion and respect our children by holding sensitive and mature discussions in private, refrain from inappropriate language and behavior, resist the urge to use cell phones, and keep the best interests of not just their own child, but the students as a whole, always in mind.

## Media and Electronics

Bayou Village School strongly discourages the use of electronic media by young children and encourages families to observe and think about the effects of media such as television, radio, movies, video games, computers, tablets, and cell phones, on their young children. As a school, we believe that young children should not be exposed to such media, and that, if they are, exposure should be limited and supervised by the parents.

Based on current research, our experience as classroom teachers, and our understanding of child development, we are moved to further educate ourselves and explore the influence of media on the learning process, and in our school. We invite you to be active participants in this, as



Waldorf-inspired education is a partnership between parents and teachers.

We ask that parents act with wisdom and discretion when considering what your child is exposed to, and ask that screen time is limited to the utmost extent possible. As a community we are guided by the principles of open discussion, truthful reflection, and support of one another in achieving a healthy balance of family time to ensure enjoyment of media does not dominate our children's thinking, will, and emerging morality.

Our formal media statement can be found below:

### *Media Statement*

Bayou Village School is committed to promoting the healthy mental, physical, emotional, and social growth of children. Through cultivating each child's imagination, artistic sensibility, and capacity for independent and critical thinking, our approach to education attempts to support and build on the child's inherent capacities for learning. Maximizing a child's ability to learn requires his / her mental, emotional, and physical engagement at the highest level. It is with the goal of striving for the ideal learning environment that we question the use of electronic media for young children. For our purposes, electronic media includes television, DVDs, videos and video games, computers, MP3 players, and other similar sound devices. Such media are known to interfere with children's natural play instincts and inhibit the imagination. Media of this kind often introduces powerful, sophisticated, and complex images and sounds that can be overwhelming, inappropriate, and misleading. Additionally, current research suggests that the rapid succession of flickering images diminishes a child's capacities for attention and memory development, both of which are essential to

learning. Media use is known to habituate a learning state that lacks full physical, emotional and sensory involvement. The influence of electronic media can also interfere with a child's ability to participate in the overall life of the classroom. Regardless of content, it is said to cause a diminished development of the senses through passive viewing and listening. The effects of media's pre-programmed and synthesized sounds and images can cause stress, leaving little or no room for creative input. When natural learning modes are inhibited, a child can become disengaged, frustrated, or unable to concentrate. When a child is in an active learning process, there is participation, visible engagement, focus and enthusiastic response. We strive through the Waldorf approach to provide an environment in every classroom that nurtures this deep level of engagement and vitality in the learning process.

## **School Policies on Electronics Usage**

### **Students**

Students are not permitted to use cell phones, tablets, computers, and other personal electronic devices at BVS or at school events. Faculty and staff will confiscate such devices and they will be held in the Administration Office for parent pickup.

### **Parents, Faculty, and Staff**

We ask that parents, Faculty, and staff refrain from using such devices around children, on school grounds and/or at school sponsored events. If you must use a cell phone for purposes other than taking photographs, please avoid using it where children are present.

# Discipline Policy

Bayou Village School attempts to surround the children with a rhythmically consistent, safe, and nurturing environment. Therefore, the primary strategy for discipline is through redirection of the child to a healthier activity.

Discipline at Bayou Village School is rooted in respect for the individual, and our approach is pedagogical rather than punitive. If problems persist, the process outlined herein will be used to work with the child and family, with the aim to help each child develop the attitudes and skills to act responsibly.

The expectation is for each student to:

- Be courteous
- Be truthful
- Be respectful of their peers, teachers, staff, and all visitors
- Be compassionate, considering others' emotional and physical well-being
- Take care of their own property and that of others
- Use polite and socially acceptable language at all times
- Show good will by responding to requests and directions promptly and willingly
- Be tolerant of the differences of others

These behaviors are best learned through imitation, so we ask and expect that parents and caregivers also act in accordance to these expectations.

Discipline measures may include a verbal correction, a conversation, assigned work or writing, a time-out,

restriction from activities, a warning, or another consequence the teacher feels appropriate.

The use of curse words and pejorative language is strictly forbidden, as are behaviors that threaten or cause bodily harm, which includes bruising, blood, and breakage of limbs. Defacement of property belonging to the school or to other students, stealing, and disrespectful conduct toward the physical self and space of other persons is also forbidden.

Teachers will write incident reports when bodily harm comes to students as a result of both play and conflict, and reserve the right to take additional action, including parent teacher conferences, behavior intervention plans, scheduled detentions in which the parent will also be present to supervise their child, taking part in restorative conduct that repairs a wrong or harm done to persons or property, and expulsion in cases where student conduct cannot be remedied to comply with community standards.

Rarely are children asked to leave the school, but in serious and repeated cases, a discussion with the parents to determine the right course of action will occur that may include permanent removal of the student from the school. This is a drastic scenario and a matter not left up to an individual. Decisions such as these are made by a group and only after thorough, thoughtful, and careful consideration.

Our community standards and disciplinary methods are informed by the work of Rudolf Steiner and developmentally appropriate restorative conduct and are fully compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, as well as other federal and state legislation regarding the rights of the child.

# Issue Resolution

We firmly believe that all people have the right to be treated respectfully and with dignity at all times. Our desire is to create and maintain an environment of caring cooperation, integrity, and inclusion. As a community, and as part of that community, we wish to empower each and every person with the ability to guide discussions and activities towards a healthy environment.

We are examples to our children, and thus must hold ourselves to the standards which we wish them to embrace. Conflict happens, arguments occur, people misunderstand. How we approach conflict and the resolution thereof is a teachable moment to our children. We must show maturity and kindness, understanding and acceptance, courtesy and respect, when seeking resolution.

Often conflict occurs due to misunderstanding. Being open and honest about your concerns typically leads to quick resolution with the parties involved. Should a conflict arise, please make certain you have followed these steps:

- 1) Speak directly with the individuals involved. Often issues can be resolved through open, direct, and respectful communication.
- 2) Inform the Administrator and have a mediated discussion, if necessary, with the Faculty or staff member in question. This meeting will be documented.
- 3) If the issue needs further attention, please request from the Office Assistant a Resolution Form, fill it out, and submit it to the Office Assistant in a sealed envelope and directed to the attention of the Human Resources Committee Chairperson.

# Waldorf Education Resources

There are a variety of ways to learn more about the benefits of a Waldorf education. The Faculty and staff are an excellent resource and welcome your questions. Lectures and workshops are offered throughout the year.

There are ample books that embrace the philosophy. Among our recommendations are (note that descriptions are from seller's website):

## **Simplicity Parenting**

*Kim John Payne*

A manifesto for protecting the grace of childhood, *Simplicity Parenting* is an eloquent guide to bringing new rhythms to bear on the lifelong art of raising children. *Simplicity Parenting* offers inspiration, ideas, and a blueprint for change: Streamline your home environment.

## **You are Your Child's First Teacher**

*Rahima Baldwin*

Some of the most important learning years happen before your child reaches school. In *You Are Your Child's First Teacher*, respected Waldorf educator Rahima Baldwin Dancy explains the different stages of learning that children go through from birth to age six, giving you the wisdom and understanding to enrich your child's natural development in the right way at the right time.

## **Heaven on Earth: A Handbook for Parents of Young Children**

*Sharifa Oppenheimer*

Although our cultural values and family structures may change, it is the atmosphere in the home that

continues to form the foundation of a child's life. In *Heaven on Earth*, parent and educator Sharifa Oppenheimer reveals how parents can make the home environment warm, lively, loving, and consistent with their highest ideals.

### **Lifeways Working with Family Questions**

*Gundrun Davy and Bons Voors*

*Lifeways* is about children, about family life, and about being a parent. But most of all it is about freedom—and how the tension between personal fulfillment and family life may be resolved.

### **Beyond the Rainbow Bridge: Nurturing our Children from Birth to Seven**

*Barbara I. Patterson, Pamela Bradely, and Jean Riordan*

Full of everyday wisdom for busy parents, this treasure of a book is for all caregivers who value imaginative play, the necessity of daily routine, and the benefits of creative discipline.

### **Seven Times the Sun - Guiding Children Through Rhythms of the Day**

*Shea Staley*

*Seven Times the Sun* is a one-of-a-kind book, full of ideas, reflections, and practical advice offering a fresh view of daily life in the home and family.

### **Waldorf Education: A Family Guide**

*P. Fenner and K. Rivers*

What draws parents and educators toward Waldorf Education today? "*Waldorf Education - A Family Guide*" offers a "first look" for parents and educators into the history, philosophy, curriculum, and traditions of this unique education.

## **The Education of the Child**

*Rudolf Steiner*

Steiner originally published the essay at the core of this book in 1907. It represents his earliest ideas on education, in which he lays out the soul spiritual processes of human development, describing the need to understand how the being of a child develops through successive “births,” beginning with the physical body’s entry into earthly life, and culminating in the emergence of the I-being with adulthood.

## **Understanding Waldorf Education: Teaching from the Inside Out**

*Jack Petrash*

Through learning experiences that involve all of the senses, children use a variety of intelligences to develop thought, feeling, and intentional, purposeful activity. Whether you're Waldorf parent or teacher, this book contains important ideas on learning that you can apply today.

There are also numerous websites devoted to Waldorf Education:

**Association of Waldorf Schools of North America**

[www.awsna.org](http://www.awsna.org)

**Why Waldorf Works**

[www.whywaldorfworks.org](http://www.whywaldorfworks.org)

**Eugene Schwartz’s Millennial Child**

[www.millennialchild.org](http://www.millennialchild.org)

**The Alliance for Childhood**

[www.allianceforchildhood.org](http://www.allianceforchildhood.org)

**Waldorf Online Library**

[www.waldorflibrary.org](http://www.waldorflibrary.org)



We encourage parents to read these and other books available in our library to broaden understanding, share experiences, develop techniques, and embrace the education and well-being of their child.