

THE EARLY YEARS

Parent and child classes for 18 months to 3-years-old



WALDORF SCHOOL
ORANGE COUNTY

Playgroup Classes

18 months to 3 years

You Choose One:

Tuesdays 9 - 11 AM

Thursdays 9 - 11 AM

Fridays 10:30 - 12:30

Schedule - 3 Sessions:

Session #1

September 13 - December 17

Session #2

January 3 - April 1

Session #3

April 18 - June 17



Open-ended play allows children to explore, wonder and create, which is the foundation for learning. We come into the world with an intense interest in the new environment and play is the avenue for cognitive, social-emotional and physical development in young children.

Bridge Classes

3 years old by December 1
a "bridge" between Playgroup
and Pre-K

You Choose One:

Mondays 9 - 11 AM

Wednesdays 9 - 11 AM

Fridays 9 - 11 AM

Schedule - 1 Session:

September 13 - June 17

Why Waldorf?

Today's research tells us that the first five years of a child's life are critical to their health and well-being. These years create a trajectory in terms of interest in learning and self-actualization. Science has also shown us that the more senses used in learning (see, smell, taste, touch, hear, movement and add the sense of the other or empathy), the stronger the brain development.

Worldwide early childhood educators recognized the importance of the early year experiences before the science validated their work, and the first early childhood educators provided young children with opportunities for open-ended, creative play because they knew through observation and experience that it was right. Waldorf early childhood educators recognize the same wonder and instinctual engagement in young children that Jean Piaget saw and gave different labels to (sensory motor, pre-operational, concrete operational and formal operational). Yet, Waldorf educators also take the respect for the students one more step, and that is to recognize how critical it is to integrate the qualities (think empathy and artistic), experience (think hands-on and active) and "thinking" (intellectual engagement and cognitive development) in order to meet the individual human being as more than just a brain.

Registration Begins

June 1, 2021

www.waldorfschool.com/playgroup

www.waldorfschool.com

2350 Canyon Drive, Costa Mesa, CA 92627

949/574-7775

Waldorf education was founded at the time of a reformation in education and reflects theory in line with the founder, Rudolf Steiner's predecessors John Locke, Jean Jacques Rousseau (stages of education), Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (the "whole" child), and Friedrich Froebel (all life should be seen as school and so named "kindergarten" or children's garden). You can see the commonalities between Waldorf education and the work of Maria Montessori, Loris Malaguzzi (Regio Emilia) and John Dewey (the Progressive Movement in America) relative to hands-on or active learning. Steiner's vision aligned with his contemporaries in that education should begin where the learner is; whatever the child brings to the educational experience is to be worked with, not against. Yet Steiner's vision also included the intention for graduates to not only have skills and knowledge but to be able to "read life" and engage in life with an interest in fellow human beings and life-long learning. At the Waldorf School of Orange County, the teachers strive to model, lead, guide and teach with the qualities of enthusiasm, art in all forms, purpose and joy. This begins in the early years.

Children come and...

Explore a child-friendly environment that is safe, challenging and emotionally nurturing with simple play materials.

Delight in the special attention given to support their unfolding interests, motor abilities, and problem-solving skills.

Experience social interaction in play that stimulates their speech and language development.

Engage with other children in their stage of development, while expanding social capacities.

Parents come and...

Experience an environment that encourages the valuable exchange of ideas and information, and provides a framework for why Waldorf works.

Explore the value of observation to see and understand what their children are doing and how they are learning as they play.

Delight in the joy of sharing songs and games with your child that support their speech and language development.

Meet other parents and find a community of sharing and support.

Discover new tips for parenting and caregiving.



Your Teacher

Holly Richards brings 25 years of experience at WSOC, including Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, Grades 1-5, Early Childhood Teacher Preparation, and mentoring as a Regional WECAN Representative. Her seven years teaching Early Childhood Education classes at Saddleback and CSUF also supports her work with young children and parents. She earned her B.A. in Child and Adolescent Development from California State University at Fullerton, her M.A. in Human Development with a focus on Leadership in Education from Pacific Oaks College, and her Certificate in Waldorf Education from Rudolf Steiner College.



"Play is the highest form of research"

Albert Einstein

Daily Rhythm

Arrival-

The morning begins with free play in the comfort of a home-like room with natural and simple materials. The simplicity leaves the children free to imagine how to meet their own needs and to create their own scenarios and intentions. Children younger than four see the world from their center and they play alongside other children, observing others but sharing and interactive play is not expected. They will however imitate everything they see modeled. Therefore, parents and caretakers are welcome to "model" or engage in purposeful work (setting the snack table or making a simple craft offered) and conversation. Teachers will assist in the play when needed, prepare snacks, offer simple crafts (occasionally) and be available for conversation with the parents and caretakers. Just as important as modeling or socializing, is the opportunity to observe play. You will be surprised by what you can observe when not distracted, and this observation supports your parenting more than you will know.

Circle and Story-

Teachers will sing to invite parents/caretakers and children for a simple circle and story around the circle rug. Both the circle and story themes will focus on nature or season, using manipulatives to provoke interest and inspire imagination. Parents are asked to participate as this helps the children feel safe and secure in trying this new opportunity. Although it may feel awkward for the adults at first, the experience almost always results in feelings of warmth and joy.

Snack Time-

A simple and healthy snack is provided by the school with consideration for allergies. The children sit at the table with teachers and with their parents immediately behind them. The snack is served following a simple verse (blessing) to offer appreciation and gratitude. Parents are asked to model very quiet voices for simple, young child appropriate conversation. This type of experience supports socialization (development of social skills needed to engage in life) for the children. When the children finish eating, they will take their dish and spoon to the dishwashing station and scrape, wash and rinse them. In the beginning parents will need to lead and help but one of the teachers will also be at the station to help. This simple "habit forming" is a beginning of what Waldorf education calls "will work" and starting this simply and early with ease and comfort sets the foundation of a sense of "we just do what is needed to take care of our home and others". (The children do not need to know that we will be washing the dishes again later as part of our preparation for the next day.)

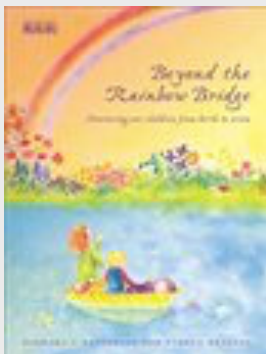
Outdoor Play-

Children will have opportunity for open-ended exploration and play in the Early Years yard where the opportunities include a hill, slide, tunnel, sand box, block play and water or kitchen area. Please bring your children in clothes that can get dirty or wet or maybe even muddy. In rainy or drizzly weather, please have raincoats/jackets, hat/hood and boots so that the option to enjoy the rain is possible. You may wish to have an umbrella for yourself.

Goodbye-

The time together will close with a song, goodbyes and the smile of knowing we will return again the next week.

Recommended Reading



Beyond the Rainbow Bridge is an award-winning book that belongs on the nightstand of every parent with young children! 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.

Co-authors Barbara J. Patterson and Pamela Bradley offer realistic suggestions for creating a healthy family life that can be incorporated into any lifestyle.

Chapters include:

- Raising Healthy, Happy and Capable Children
- Play, the Lifeblood of a Healthy Childhood
- Developing the Twelve Senses
- Creative Discipline

This truly practical book also includes instructions for making soft toys and creating birthday stories, as well as resources, recommended reading, and much more.

Great for expectant parents, parents with young children, grandparents, and anyone who understands the importance of a creating a warm and nurturing environment for children.

Playgroup Fee

\$400 per session (or)

**\$1,000 for all 3 sessions
purchased at once**

Fees are non-refundable

Bridge Class Fee

\$1,000 for the year

**All fees are paid in one
non-refundable payment**

Registration Opens

June 1, 2021

www.waldorfschool.com

FAQs

What is the difference between Playgroup and Bridge classes?

They differ only in that the Bridge classes provide an opportunity for the children to play independently, for a portion of the class, under the guidance of our teachers, while parents meet nearby for a study about Waldorf and parenting.

What happens if I begin in a class and need to withdraw unexpectedly?

Refunds are available only until the end of the first week of your starting date, and will be 50% of the total fee.

Can I purchase more than one Playgroup session at a time?

Yes. Sessions may be purchased one at a time or all together at a discount. They fill very quickly, so we encourage you to consider signing up for more than one if you are considering it. We don't want you to be disappointed if classes fill before you are registered!

What happens if I have to miss a class?

No problem! We recognize that there are going to be days when you are not able to make it. Since our Playgroup curriculum is play-based, there are not concerns about missing a class. It is the overall rhythm of attendance that is important. There are no "make-up" days offered.

Can another adult bring my child to class?

Certainly. We are happy for either parent, grandparent, nanny, or friend to bring your child. In fact, it is a lovely way to introduce that person to the Waldorf School curriculum.

May I join a Bridge class mid-year?

If there is space remaining in a Bridge class, we welcome a new student at a pro-rated fee.

Which days are you closed for holidays?

The teacher will post a calendar with holidays and school closure dates. This is available on our web site and will also be included in your class roster for your reference.

Why is there such a specific age cut-off for Bridge classes?

Bridge classes are the "bridge" to our Pre-Kindergarten. Pre-Kindergartners are at least 3 years and 9 months old by September 1st of the year of entry to Pre-K. Therefore all students in the Bridge classes must turn 3 years by December 1st as they will be considered to transition together.

When do we apply for Pre-Kindergarten?

It happens very quickly! The deadline for application for the fall occurs in January. This deadline is important to note as our Pre-Kindergartens fill each year and we want to be certain that we can welcome our Playgroup students first.

How can I learn more about Waldorf Education?

Why not begin by joining us for an all school tour? These Walk Through the Grades tours are offered throughout the school year. To RSVP - www.waldorfschool.com/admissions-calendar.

What if I have questions? Who do I ask?

Registration/fees/refund questions are directed to **Maureen McDermott**, Registrar - mmcdermott@waldorfschool.com - (949) 574-7775 x208.

Application to Pre-K and long-term program planning questions are directed to **Kathy Christian**, Admissions Director - kchristian@waldorfschool.com