



Mulberry School Parent Handbook

2008-2009

25 Markland Street
Kingston, Ontario K7K 1S2

(613) 542-0669

www.mulberryschool.net

Welcome to Mulberry School!

On behalf of the Mulberry School Faculty, Staff and Board of Directors, we extend a warm welcome to all new and returning families. We respect the trust that you have shown us by placing your child in our school and look forward to working together as a team between home and school for the benefit of your child.

This Parent Handbook is intended to serve as a first resource on many aspects of the school's educational and social activities. We encourage you to seek out other resources, such as the school's website www.mulberryschool.net, and to get to know your child's teacher, other parents and community members.

Mulberry School is enriched by its strong, diverse and vibrant community. We invite you to become part of our community and join us in celebrating seasonal festivals, class potlucks, parent evenings, craft circle, artistic workshops and coffee mornings.

On behalf of Mulberry School,

Carlina Heins
Faculty Chair

Peelu Hira
Administrator

Imaan Bayoumi
Chair, Board of Directors

*Receive the children with reverence,
Educate them with love,
Let them go forth in freedom.*

- Rudolf Steiner

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Faculty, Staff and Board Members

Faculty and Staff

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Carlina Heins | Handwork Teacher and Faculty Chair |
| Mary Huggard | Director of Parent and Child Education |
| Sarah Gibson-Bray | Morning Garden Teacher |
| Gillian Turgoose | Morning Garden Assistant Teacher |
| Tammy Caldwell | Kindergarten Teacher |
| Holly Nguyen | Kindergarten Assistant Teacher |
| Laura Gerrity | Afternoon Kindergarten Teacher and Grade School Support |
| Laura Miller | Grade 1/2 Teacher |
| Keri Nelson | Grade 3 Teacher |
| Brita Oeding | Grade 4/5 Teacher |
| Charlotte Schurer | Grade 6/7/8 Teacher |
| Jacinthe Beyea | French Teacher and Grade 3 Afternoon Teacher |
| Mary Pearson | Grade 6/7/8 Physical Education Teacher |
| Nadiya Izbitskaya | Choir Teacher |
| Cori Somers and Danielle Lennon | Violin Teachers |

| | | |
|-------------|-------------------|--|
| Peelu Hira | Administrator | administrator@mulberryschool.net |
| Cheryl Reid | Financial Officer | cheryl@mulberryschool.net |

Board of Directors

Imaan Bayoumi, *Chair*
Kris Colwell, *Vice-Chair*
Jude Larkin, *Vice-Chair*
Rob Ivimey, *Treasurer*
Johanne Mednick Myles, *Secretary*
Charlotte Schurer, *Faculty Representative*
Nancy MacMillan
Anja Troje
Skot Caldwell
Brian Hotson
Astrid Michels

* Directors may change at the Annual General Meeting on October 22, 2008.

Mission Statement of Mulberry School

Mulberry School endeavours to awaken and nurture
a reverence for life, a sensitivity to beauty
and a love of learning.

By schooling the head, heart and hands
through work and play,
our Waldorf education nourishes children,
parents, the community and the world.

We offer programs for the infant, toddler, pre-school,
kindergarten and school-age child, as well as adult education opportunities.

We seek to be rooted in and responsive
to the needs of the environment, the community
and the spirit of the School.

*Originally adopted by the Mulberry School Board of Directors
Martinmas, Remembrance Day
November 11, 1998*

Vision of Mulberry School

The organization that will achieve the mission of Mulberry School will be a community built out of service and dedication to the ideals in Waldorf Education, made unique in our own local setting. We will be a community that seeks to be accessible and that is enriched by diversity. We will be a recognized Waldorf School with good ties to WSAO, AWSNA, and other member schools in our vicinity.

The programs offered by Mulberry School will all be of high quality and reflect the Waldorf name we will bear. We will offer multiple pre-school and kindergarten programs that will feed our grade school. Specialty subjects, such as eurythmy, woodworking, languages, hand-work and music will be part of the program when appropriate. We will maintain a high priority on the parent and child programs, as well as parent and infant, and prenatal programs. There will be a vibrant adult education program made available for parents of the school and the community. Anthroposophical study will also be offered for those interested.

The Faculty will continue to have high calibre teachers, who are supported in their needs for salaries, benefits and a reasonable workload. Specialty teachers will be hired, as they are needed. There will be a Faculty Chair in a paid leadership position. The Faculty will be ever deepening their pedagogical and anthroposophical foundations and working towards certification, with financial support from the school. The Faculty as a decision-making body will work out of a mandate that is rooted in Waldorf pedagogy.

The Board of Directors will work from a Waldorf organizational model. Directors will be respectful of anthroposophy as a way to deepen Board work as well as personal self-development. The Board will be made up of those who understand and have experience of the biography of the school; those who are new and willing to learn from the past as well as bring fresh insights and enthusiasm; and those who have particular expertise that would benefit the school. All Board Directors, in particular the Executive, will be expected to fulfill their obligations in congruence with policies set out, and will adhere to fiscal responsibility. The Board and committees will be dedicated to learning and practising consensus building, inclusivity, teamwork, and community building with the school as a whole. In order to maintain and support a highly functioning board there will be a regular review process. Committees will be appropriately comprised of Board, Faculty, and non-Board members, and will work according to the mandate set out for each. The role of committees and their responsibilities and decision-making power will expand over time. There will be fluid and regular communication amongst committees and with the Board. The Chairperson will see to facilitate this.

The Administration will continue to expand in order to meet the changing needs of the school and will follow Waldorf administrative models. Skilled leadership and expertise will be sought to fulfill the various roles that will be essential to the school's growth.

The executive leadership of the school will be comprised of the Faculty Chair, Board Chair and Administrative Head (ABC). It will liaise with committee chairs. Through regular meetings, ABC will link the work of the school together. It will provide support for each other's areas, and will offer constructive criticism when appropriate. It will be responsible for developing conflict-resolution processes.

The building will reflect ecological, aesthetic, and architectural ideals conducive to Waldorf education.

The facility will comfortably hold all our programs, and contain the potential for growth. There will be a faculty/meeting room, adequate office space and an assembly/gym space. An area that can be used for a community market/café will also be included. Access to the natural world will be available for all classes and the Mulberry Community. Outdoor education, gardening, and festivals will be possible in this setting, whether this is on site or at a satellite country location.

Mulberry School encourages other anthroposophical initiatives. These may include anthroposophical medicine; biodynamic agriculture; music and art therapies; business enterprises; conferences, etc. Mulberry School will seek to work collaboratively with other local groups and agencies committed to aims similar to ours.

Mulberry School is committed to working creatively with this vision statement into the future. It may be reviewed in five years, or as necessary.

This vision statement is a working document intended to guide the Board, Faculty, and Administration in developing planning strategies and goals for Mulberry School.

Agreed to at the Board and Faculty Retreat, June 7, 2003

Administrative Information

Office Hours

The school office is open from 8:30 am to 3:45 pm Monday to Thursday and 8:30 am to 2:15 pm on Friday. Peelu Hira, Administrator, and Cheryl Reid, Financial Officer, and Carlina Heins, Faculty Chair, look forward to speaking with parents and community members in person, by telephone (613-542-0669) or by e-mail (administrator@mulberryschool.net).

School Hours

Arrival:

- ❑ Grade School children may arrive in the yard as early as 8:30 am. The bell rings at 8:40 am; classes begin promptly at 8:45 am.
- ❑ Morning Garden and Kindergarten children may arrive at 8:45 am; classes begin at 9:00 am.

Before Care:

Before Care is available Mondays through Fridays from 8:00 to 8:30 am. Please note:

- ❑ Children must be five years old and up.
- ❑ The cost is \$6 per day and is billed monthly.
- ❑ Care must be arranged in advance with the Administrator.

Departure:

- ❑ Morning Garden children are to be picked up at 12:00 noon in the classroom.
- ❑ Kindergarten children are to be picked at 12:15 pm outside the classroom for children attending half days. Kindergarten children attending full days on Mondays through Thursdays are to be picked up at 3:30 pm. Kindergarten children attending full days on Fridays are to be picked up at 2:00 pm.
- ❑ Grades 1 to 8 children are to be picked up from classrooms/yard according to class schedules at 3:30 pm on Monday to Thursday and 2:00 pm on Friday.
- ❑ Grades 4 to 8 children may be released independently with prior written permission by the parent to be kept on file in the school office.
- ❑ Please respect teacher's schedules by picking up your child(ren) promptly!

After-School Care:

After-school Care is available on Mondays through Thursdays from 3:30 pm to 5:15 pm. Please note:

- ❑ Children must be five years old and up. Four year old children will be accepted on a trial basis.
- ❑ The cost is \$10 per day and is billed monthly (snack is provided).
- ❑ Care must be arranged in advance with the Administrator.

Lunch Care for Morning Garden and Kindergarten:

Lunch care is available Mondays to Thursdays from 12:00 noon to 1:00 pm to children not enrolled in an afternoon program at a cost of \$6 per day. Parents should bring an ample and nutritious lunch. Please refer to the lunch guidelines on page x. There is a maximum of 12 spaces; priority is given to children enrolled in the afternoon program. There are 2 spaces available for 3 year olds for lunch care.

Weather:

Outdoor play is an essential part of your child's daily rhythm. Please ensure that your child is appropriately dressed for the weather each day and that you provide sufficient extra clothing to be left at school in a clearly marked bag.

In the event of severe weather and poor driving conditions, our school may be closed. The safety of families, Faculty and Staff is our primary concern. Please phone the office (613-542-0669) to confirm closure. As an example, Mulberry School may be closed when the public/separate school buses are cancelled (announced early in the mornings on various radio stations).

Classroom Policies and Procedures

Rhythm:

Rhythm is of central importance to the nourishment and orientation of the young child. Mulberry programs follow daily, weekly and yearly patterns.

Daily

Morning Garden and Kindergarten: an ebb and flow of creative play and structured time of circle, story, and artistic activities.

Grade School: After the morning lesson, during which core academic subjects are taught (including math, language arts, history, geography), children receive instruction in specialty subjects such as French, painting, nature studies, handwork, music, woodwork, choir and physical education.

Weekly

A regular cycle of activities such as handwork, watercolour painting, baking, nature discovery/gardening, and drama/movement/music is explored in each classroom.

Yearly

At Mulberry School, we celebrate birthdays and seasonal festivals.

Communication:

The Mulberry School Faculty, Staff and Board of Directors are committed to ongoing improvements in the area of communication as our school continues to grow. We are committed to working in partnership with parents in order to build bridges between home and school. All pedagogical, administrative and financial questions are treated with respect and confidentiality.

Parent Teacher Communication

- Speaking with your child's teacher
An open and respectful dialogue between the parent and teacher is fundamental to the success of each child's well-being. Please check in briefly with your child's teacher at drop-off or pick-up or schedule an interview time for a discussion.
- Your child's mail pouch
- Class letters
- Parent-teacher interviews
- Parent evenings
Please look for notices in your child's mail pouch for dates and times of parent evenings, which enable parents and teachers to discuss aspects of Waldorf education as well as updates of what is going on in the classrooms.

School Communication

- Bulletin boards
Please refer to the main entrance, first and second floor bulletin boards for notices of school events or information on broader educational issues.
- Mulberry Newsletter
Our school newsletter is issued three times per school year.

If I have a question or problem, whom do I contact?

- Pedagogical Questions
Please speak to your child's teacher directly on matters concerning the curriculum, discipline, homework, schoolwork and academic standards.

For further advice, please contact Carlina Heins, Faculty Chair, who will pursue concerns in collaboration with the parent and teacher. If an additional step is desired, the Administrative Committee (Faculty Chair, Administrator, Board Chair) will strive for a satisfactory resolution.

- Administrative
If you have questions concerning school policies and/or procedures, please contact Peelu Hira, Administrator.

Parents seeking further resolution with any concern may submit a letter to the Administrative Committee.

Behaviour Management:

A daily rhythm and activities appropriate to the developmental needs of the children keeps problems to a minimum. Limits and rules are established early to ensure the safety and protection of children. Teachers redirect disruptive play and model caring responses to elicit gentle play and learning among classmates. When a problem does exist, teachers will speak with parents to arrange a meeting.

Student Records:

Student records will be kept in confidence and released only by written request.

Clothing Guidelines:

We strive to provide an environment that nurtures the children in their learning. We want to protect their childhood innocence from the influence of consumerism and commercialism. We also strive to protect our students from the premature awakening of vanity or envy related to their appearance and clothing.

Students are expected to be dressed in neat, clean, comfortable and appropriate school clothing that does not impede their participation in any activities. In order to promote good health, positive self image and a good learning environment, we request that you abide by the dress code.

1. Clothing must not bear logos, advertising or images from electronic media.
2. Shorts and skirts must be as long as the fingertips when hanging straight at sides.
3. Midriffs must be covered. Tank tops may be worn though tube tops and spaghetti straps are unacceptable.
4. Caps and hats must be removed before entering the classroom.
5. Students must have indoor footwear. Good supporting shoes are required to support the broad variety of activities in the curriculum. Sandals without backs, flip-flops, rubber clogs and slippers are not appropriate. Shoes with rollers, lights, sound effects or other gimmicks are not allowed.
6. Make-up and nail polish may not be worn. Children in the Early Childhood programs and Grade 1/2 are asked not to wear jewelry or watches.
7. Neither very tight fitting nor very loose fitting clothes, such as sweat suits, large jeans or baggy shirts, may be worn.
8. Being able to see clearly is imperative. Please be sure that there is no interference with vision. Hair should be cut or tied back if necessary.

The teachers of the Early Childhood programs also ask that children wear:

1. Indoor footwear: soft soled slippers or shoes through which the ground can be felt for Morning Garden and flexible bottomed shoes that are suitable for gym activities in Kindergarten.
2. Clothes made of natural fibres whenever possible.
3. Seasonally appropriate hats for outdoors.

What to Bring from Home:

All Children:

- ❑ Full change of clothing in a *well-labelled* cloth bag (underpants, socks, shirt, pants, etc.). Clothing should be labelled and must be weather appropriate (e.g., rubber boots and raincoats and pants for rainy days; snow jacket, pants and lined boots for winter days).

Morning Garden and Kindergarten Children Staying Full Days:

- ❑ A health lunch and afternoon snack, including sufficient drinks.
- ❑ Labelled toothbrush and cup, if parent chooses.
- ❑ Labelled cloth bag with 2 blankets that cover your child and a small pillow.

Grade School Children:

- ❑ Labelled cup for water.
- ❑ A healthy lunch and snack, including sufficient drinks.

What *not* to Bring from Home:

Items from home can change the friendly dynamics of the children's interaction. They can also be misplaced or broken. We ask that children **not bring** personal items such as toys, books, and mechanical devices to school, unless requested by their class teacher. Please avoid logos and pictures on children's clothing and on other belongings such as lunch-boxes and backpacks. Plain colours and patterns are preferred (please refer to above clothing guidelines).

- ❑ Bikes should be locked up outside on the bike rack.
- ❑ Scooters and car seats may be left inside at the YARD door only (not in the main entrance).
- ❑ Lost and found located by the yard door will be emptied at the end of every month.

Food:

Our school supports the belief that what we eat and drink has a profound effect on the health of our bodies. Natural, pure and health giving foods with minimum processing will be prepared and served for morning snack in the Morning Garden and Kindergarten. If your child is on a special diet, please notify the teacher and, if necessary, provide the teacher with appropriate snacks for him or her.

Grade School children and others who stay for a full day are to bring their own lunches and snacks from home. Our school strives to have litter-free lunches. Garbage will be sent home. Only fruit and vegetable scraps will be composted. Please provide plenty of simple, wholesome and unprocessed food for your child.

Suggestions:

- ❑ Whole fruits: apples, oranges, pears, peaches, dried fruit.
- ❑ Vegetables: carrot sticks, celery, salad, cherry tomatoes, green/red peppers.
- ❑ Grains: whole grain crackers, breads, and bagels, rice or pasta salad, tortilla chips, rice cakes, granola.
- ❑ Proteins: beans, legumes, meat, nuts and nut butters (**EXCEPT IN NUT-FREE CLASSROOMS**).
- ❑ Dairy: yoghurt, cheese and milk.
- ❑ Drinks: water, milk, soy/rice drinks, 100% fruit juice, 100% vegetable juice.

Illness and Attendance Guidelines

General:

Please call the school at 542-0669 if your child will be absent or late.

Staff will not generally administer medication. On an "exception only" basis, medicine prescribed by a physician in the original container may be administered. Medication Information and Parent Consent forms must be filled out before medication will be administered to an attending child.

Mulberry School strives to provide a healthy environment for children, staff and parents. To avoid many common illnesses, teach children HOW and WHEN to wash their hands properly: Wash regularly before eating and after using the toilet. Rub hands briskly with soap and water for at least 15 seconds. This kills up to 99% of germs present. In the classroom we sing a little rhyme twice through such as : 'This is the way we wash/scrub our hands...'

When a child becomes ill during the day:

Parents will be contacted immediately and arrangements made for the child to be taken home. The parent may be asked to return home with the child if an illness:

- ❑ prevents the child from participating comfortably in program activities
- ❑ results in greater needs for care than the staff can provide without compromising the care of other children
- ❑ may be contagious and therefore infect others.

Keep your child home if any of the following are present:

- ❑ *Unusual behaviour*: including extreme lethargy or irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, or other signs of possible illness. Your child should be kept home until a health care professional indicates that the child can attend the program.
- ❑ *Diarrhea*: An episode of diarrhea within the past 24 hours. Exclusion from school should continue until the child is symptom-free for 48 hours.

- ❑ *Vomiting:* An episode of vomiting during the previous 24 hours. Exclusion from school should continue until the child is symptom-free for 48 hours.
- ❑ *Fever:* Oral/tympanic temperature equal to or greater than 38C (100.4F). Auxiliary temperature equal to or greater than 38C (100.4F). Temperature above 102F is likely a sign of influenza or infection. Exclusion from school should continue until the child is fever-free without medication for 24 hours.
- ❑ *Rash:* A rash appearing with fever or behaviour change. Exclusion from school should continue until the child is evaluated by a health care professional. (See Impetego)
- ❑ *Colds and Coughs:* We request that a child be kept home for the first 24 to 48 hours of a cold. Also when a cold is accompanied by a fever, extreme lethargy or irritability or a runny nose that is persistent and/or if a clear colour. This kind of discharge makes the child more contagious. (A persistent runny nose with a green/yellow colour may indicate an infection.)
- ❑ In the case of a severe or 'chesty' sounding cough exclusion could be required until a health care professional has been consulted. A health care professional's note may be required to return to the program. Teachers should be informed when cold or cough like symptoms are due to allergies, asthma or other non contagious conditions.
- ❑ *Sore Throat:* May be accompanied by head cold, runny nose or ear infection. Majority are due to minor viral illnesses. One third of cases are diagnosed as 'strep' which is highly contagious and requires seeing a physician ASAP.
- ❑ *Impetego:* Rough, cracked reddened area, commonly on face or legs. Itching lesions (pinhead to bean sized); fluid filled blisters form and change to honey coloured crusts; fluid from blisters spreads a highly contagious infection.
- ❑ *Pinworms:* Itchy and irritated anal area. Persistent scratching; difficulty sleeping. Wash hands often and see a physician. Notify school if there is any possibility of pinworms as it is highly contagious. Children must be treated before returning to school to avoid an outbreak.
- ❑ *Lice:* Child complains of itchy head; persistent scratching. Enlarged lymph nodes leads to possible secondary infection if scratching. Check for adult lice or nits (eggs). Notify school if there is any suspicion of head lice as it is highly contagious. Children must be treated before returning to school to avoid an outbreak.
- ❑ *Pink Eye:* Itchy, red, weepy or watery eye(s) with or without mucous. Highly contagious. Children must be treated before returning to school to avoid an outbreak.

Calendar of Events for 2008/2009

| Date | Name of Event | Type of Event |
|------------------|--|---|
| September | | |
| 2 | First Day of School KG starts at 9:30 am for first day only Grade School starts at 8:40 am | Parents/guardians welcome for opening |
| 2, 3, 4, 5 | Morning Garden staggered entry | |
| 2, 3, 4 | Welcome Tea | Parents/guardians welcome |
| 3, 4 | Open doors for Parent & Child programs | |
| 8 | Parent & Child - Session I | |
| 16 | Kindergarten potluck | |
| 24 | Board Meeting | |
| 29 | Michaelmas | In-class activity |
| October | | |
| TBA | Open House | Open to all - invite friends/family |
| 7 | Early Childhood Evening from 6:45-8:30 pm | Early Childhood parents/guardians encourage to attend |
| 13 | Thanksgiving | SCHOOL CLOSED |
| 22 | AGM | Parents/guardians encouraged to attend! |
| November | | |
| 11 | Lantern Walk | School community welcome |
| 26 | Board Meeting | |
| 28 | PD Day | SCHOOL CLOSED |
| 29 | Winter Fair | Open to all - invite friends/family |
| December | | |
| 1 and 17 | Spiral Walk (1 st for Grade School and 17 th for Kindergarten) | Class activity |
| 1 | Parent & Child - Session II | |
| 5 | St Nicholas Day celebration | Class activity |
| TBA | Morning Garden potluck | |
| 11 | Winter Assembly at 2:15 pm | Open to all |
| 12 | St. Lucia celebration | Class activity |
| 17 | Board Meeting | |
| 19 | Last day of school before winter holidays | |
| January | | |
| 5 | School resumes | |
| 28 | Board Meeting | |
| 30 | Mid-year Reports | |
| February | | |
| 13 | PD Day | SCHOOL CLOSED |
| 16 | Family Day | SCHOOL CLOSED |

| Date | Name of Event | Type of Event |
|--------------------|--|---|
| 18 | Early Childhood Evening from 6:45-8:30 pm | Early Childhood parents/guardians encouraged to attend |
| TBA | Open House | Open to all - invite friends/family |
| 25 | Board Meeting | |
| March | | |
| 5 | Spring Assembly at 2:15 pm | Open to all |
| 9-20 | March Break | SCHOOL CLOSED |
| 23 | Parent & Child - Session III | |
| 25 | Board Meeting | |
| April | | |
| April 10 | Good Friday | SCHOOL CLOSED |
| April 13 | Easter Monday | SCHOOL CLOSED |
| TBA | Open House | Open to all - invite friends/family |
| 17, 18 | Gateways Conference (Toronto) | Open to all - registration required |
| 27 | PD Day | SCHOOL CLOSED |
| 29 | Board Meeting | |
| May | | |
| 18 | Victoria Day | SCHOOL CLOSED |
| 12 | Early Childhood Evening from 6:45- 8:30 pm | Early Childhood parents/guardians encouraged to attend |
| 23 | May Fair | Open to all |
| 27 | Board Meeting | |
| June | | |
| 4 | Summer Assembly at 2:15 pm | Open to all |
| 5 | PD Day | SCHOOL CLOSED |
| 15 | Last day of Parent & Child programs | |
| 15 | Morning Garden potluck dinner | Morning Garden families welcome |
| 16 | Grade School picnic | Grade School families welcome |
| 16 | Kindergarten potluck lunch | Kindergarten families welcome |
| 17 | Grade 8 Graduation | Open to all |
| 17 | Last Day - early dismissal at 2 pm | |
| 18 | PD Day | SCHOOL CLOSED |
| 19 | PD Day | SCHOOL CLOSED |
| 24 | Board Meeting | |
| July/August | | |
| Late July/August | Summerskies | Mulberry School community welcome |
| Late August | Cleaning Days | All Mulberry School families encouraged to help prepare school for the new year |
| Late August | Open House | Open to all - Bring families/friends |