

Blue Mountains Steiner School Parents Handbook



2024



We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this country, the Darug people, and pay our respects to the elders past, present and emerging. For they hold the memories, the traditions, the cultures and hopes of Aboriginal Australians. We must remember that this land is, was and always will be traditional Aboriginal land.

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1. Introduction

Welcome to our wonderful school. We are committed to providing quality Steiner education to your child. In the interests of equity, fairness and consistency we have provided some essential information which facilitates the smooth running of the school. Your commitment to these guidelines helps to nurture and maintain our school ethos.

We look forward to your being part of our school community.
From the College of Teachers



2. Our School

Blue Mountains Steiner School endeavours to provide a balanced and purposeful educational environment that inspires a love of life-long learning.

Blue Mountains Steiner School is an established, independent, non-denominational school founded in 1983 and situated on six acres of beautiful bush-land in Hazelbrook, in the Blue Mountains, west of Sydney. Our education is based on the teachings of Dr Rudolf Steiner. Blue Mountains Steiner School is a Steiner Education Australia member school (SEA). We are also fully accredited with the New South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESA).

Our school was founded in 1983 when a group of parents, teachers and professionals met to talk about the possibility of creating the first Steiner School in the Blue Mountains. All were deeply committed to Steiner education, and wanted to build a school from the ground up, that would be surrounded by the Blue Mountains wilderness and uphold the values of Steiner Education.

The group quickly settled into a core team with diverse backgrounds including teaching, project management, social work and legal.

Throughout the foundation year the core group of six families met regularly and began to search for the right property eventually finding our current site at 83 Clearview Parade. They decided to fund the purchase of the property together by acting as co-guarantors and the first class began in 1983 with seven children.

2.1. Philosophy and Mission

Steiner schools have a unique and distinctive approach to educating children, aiming to enable each stage of growth to be fully and vividly enjoyed and experienced. They provide a balanced approach to the modern school curriculum. The academic, artistic and social aspects, or 'head, heart & hands', are treated as complementary facets of a single program of learning, allowing each to throw light on the others. This is implemented by using art as a practice, and language to develop the feelings, by nourishing the children with the rich heritage of wise folk tales, histories, fairy stories, poems, music and games that are part of our world civilisation. This creates the cultural atmosphere in which the children are taught reading, writing, arithmetic, nature study, geography, science, languages, music and other subjects.

Rudolf Steiner designed a curriculum that is responsive to the developmental phases of childhood and the nurturing of the child's imagination in a school environment. He thought that schools should cater to the needs of the child rather than the demands of the government or economic forces, so he developed schools that encourage creativity and freethinking. His teaching seeks to recognise the individuality of the child and through a balanced education, allows them to go into the world with confidence.

The unique quality of human beings is our capacity for conscious thought. Steiner schooling strives to support the



development of well rounded human beings who are able to feel deeply and broadly, to think penetratingly and clearly, and then to act rightly out of conscious and free choice.

“Our highest endeavour must be to develop free individuals who are able out of their own initiative to impart purpose and direction to their lives”.

Rudolf Steiner

Steiner Education Australia

Steiner Education Australia is the national association that currently represents over 50 Steiner/Waldorf schools and 16 Associate members throughout the states and territories of Australia. Each organisation is independent, but through working together they provide a national voice to promote and support Steiner education in Australia.

2.2. School Structure

School Council

The School Council is accountable to outside agencies, such as the Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC), (NESA), State and Federal Governments, and also to the school community for the business operation of the school. The Council delegates authority and responsibility to employees of the school and may hold them accountable for delegated management areas. Final accountability, however, resides with School Council as the employer.

Principal

The Principal is our delegated staff Operational Manager who oversees the day to day running of the school. The Principal reports to the Chairperson of Council. The Principal also sits on the College of Teachers and acts as a conduit between the Council and the College.

College of Teachers

The College of Teachers is responsible for pedagogy, welfare, curriculum and school ethos. We welcome feedback from the school community through the school website.

Our Staff

Our educators are dedicated to creating a genuine love of learning, and to respect each developmental stage of childhood when shaping lessons, planning activities, or creating the classroom climate and environment.

All of our Primary School Educators are accredited with the NSW Institute of Teachers or are participating in the pre-2004 teacher accreditation scheme, and adhere to the Australian Professional Standards, as well as having specialised training from recognised Steiner teacher training seminars.

<i>Principal</i>	Martin Buckmaster
<u>Teaching Staff</u>	
<i>Kindergarten</i>	Francine O'Dea
<i>Class 1/2</i>	Isabelle Bruderlin, Amy Brownlee & Soumya Tekkatte
<i>Class 3/4</i>	Julie Humphreys
<i>Class 5/6</i>	Elizabeth Williams
<u>Specialist Teachers</u>	
<i>Italian</i>	Jess McCann
<i>PDHPE</i>	Lindsey Pacchini
<i>Gardening</i>	Annie Cohen
<i>Orchestra</i>	Prem Love
<i>Violin</i>	Rachel Wildmare (Mare)
<u>Support Staff</u>	
<i>Classroom Assistants</i>	Meredith Cadd Leeanne Newton
<i>Student Welfare Worker</i>	Martin Buckmaster
<u>Preschool Staff</u>	
	Cath Cox (Director)
	Jasmine Marshall
	Juliana Umpierre
	Donna Hume
	Emily Martens Pospisil
	Sabrina Irani
	Nat Karnjhanacheewa
	Rika Kaula
	Michael Holmes
	Yolanda Galluzzi
<u>Administration</u>	
<i>Office Administrator</i>	Karen Perry
<i>Senior Clerical Officer</i>	Sandra Killelea
<i>Marketing & Communications</i>	Deborah Shaw
<u>Other</u>	
<i>Playgroup</i>	Karuna Elliot Laura King Rowena Doig
<i>Bus Driver</i>	Nyla Thomas
<i>Cleaners</i>	Melanie & Chris Tyrer
<i>Maintenance</i>	Paul Glass

*“Receive the children in reverence, educate them in love,
and send them forth in freedom.”
Rudolf Steiner*

3. Our Practice

By teaching a thematically integrated and developmentally appropriate program, the academic subjects are enriched and enlivened in ways which meets every stage of a child’s growth.

We foster effective learning partnerships with children and parents and focus on developing positive emotional and social wellbeing within the child and class community. There is a strong emphasis on supporting student welfare and meeting different learning styles.

All of our Primary School Educators are accredited with NESAs, and participate in ongoing professional development with both NESA-accredited and recognized Steiner teacher training providers.

4. Our Classes

Developing imaginative capacities enables students to engage with academic material and form the foundation for future creativity, problem solving and innovation. Timing of curriculum content and lessons is matched to child developmental and emotional needs. Teaching all subjects through an arts based curriculum develops the capacity to appreciate beauty in the world. We have composite classes and use the stage-based model. This means that each teacher remains with their two-year stage, where they become experts on the stage content and developmental milestones associated with each stage.

Beyond a sound foundation in the key learning areas of Literacy, Numeracy, Science and Technology, History, Geography, Creative and Performing Arts and Personal Development Health and Physical Education, learning experience include painting, drawing, sculpture, languages, craft, drama, dance, singing, music, Eurythmy, circus skills, gymnastics, swimming intensives, bushwalking, Peer Support program, camps and excursions.

We also create opportunities for connections with local Indigenous Elders through excursions, incursions and ceremony specific to our beautiful bush setting.

For further information, please attend Parent/ Carer Information evenings and also review the school website.

4.1. Early Childhood

Wattle Glow Playgroup & Glow Babies Playgroup

“Introduce the young child to earthly life through rhythm, beauty and love”.

Rudolf Steiner

We run two age group sessions: 0-2 years olds (Glow Babies) and 2-4 year olds (Wattle Glow Playgroup). Playgroup provides a time for parents to have social contact with other adults with young children, and to sample the Steiner approach to education and parenting in general.

Children and parents can play and participate in a warm and nurturing home-like environment. The children learn stories, songs, dances and games, share fruit, play outside in our early childhood playground and enjoy a story or puppet play.

The day begins with inside play where the children are free to interact with each other and play with natural materials that aid the young child’s sensory integration and the development of imagination. Meanwhile, parents help with the preparation for the day, adding to the community atmosphere.

The rhythm of the morning includes bread making where children shape and bake their own bread whilst singing. The regular rhythm helps settle babies and older children alike.

Many of the songs and games can be used at home as parents endeavour to establish rhythm and routine in the home environment. From here, the natural step for these young children is into Wattle Glow Early Learning, and from there into, Kindergarten and the primary school.

Playgroup runs several days a week, please refer to the Office.

Wattle Glow Early Learning

Wattle Glow Early Learning provides a bridge between home and school. It offers young children a gentle and caring introduction to early years learning.

The program is play-based working in harmony with the National Early Learning Years Framework which states, *‘the curriculum of the young child is play’*.

Experiences are offered to the child that foster: creativity; a love of learning; a sense of wonder; care of the environment; care of ourselves and each other.

This home-like environment allows the young child to unfold in a safe, relaxed and warm environment that nourishes the inner and outer senses.

Experienced teachers provide guidance and help nurture the child in an atmosphere of care, compassion and kindness.

The rhythm of the preschool day is thoughtfully created to allow a healthy flow from free play to group activities and structured learning experiences. This rhythmic structure provides a calming ebb and flow to the child's day and helps to foster consistency and security.

Steiner early childhood activities include free play with natural materials, emergent learning experiences and assisted projects, bush play, circle games and movement, singing and music, cooking, gardening, care of animals, stories, art and crafts.

For further information, please see our website www.wattleglow.com.au.

Kindergarten

During the first seven years children are physically forming and live very much in their imagination. This great capacity to enter into imaginative pictures and stories is a good place to begin the process of learning.

Free, creative play is considered the best preparation for self-realising adult life. The teacher endeavours to create an environment that gives children time to play and encourages their imagination. Their day consists of a balance of self directed creative playtime, rhythmic movement involving whole movement, songs and verses, story telling and artistic activities. A rich supply of natural materials provides scope for imagination in play, which refined toys often deny.

Through meeting and playing creatively together, children learn vital interpersonal skills. The teacher plays an important role in enabling relationships between children to strengthen through play. The activities in kindergarten have been carefully chosen in preparation for literacy and numeracy skills and all academic learning as the children mature through the primary years. Fine and gross motor skills are developed to enhance writing abilities, memory and sequencing. Imaginative pictures are established for reading and a strong focus is given to the use of language through repetition, speech, singing, rhymes and stories.

Kindergarten children turn 6 during the year and attend 5 days with half day on Friday.

4.2 Primary School

The primary school consists of three composite classes grouped with the teaching stages: Class 1/2 (Stage 1), Class 3/4 (Stage 2) and Class 5/6 (Stage 3). Our teachers remain teaching a stage for a number of years, becoming highly attuned to the developmental profile and curriculum needs of the students within that stage.

Further information on the curriculum indications given by Rudolf Steiner can be found on our website www.bluemountainssteiner.nsw.edu.au.

4.3 Specialist Teaching Areas

Handcraft

Teaching handcrafts is a way of engaging children in the current learning theme and assists with developing fine motor skills, hand eye coordination and spatial skills.

Languages

Each week the students from K-6 have a language lesson which includes games, cooking and cultural activities.

Music

Music is interwoven into the daily flow of each class. Classes 1-6 also work weekly with our specialist music teacher to develop their knowledge and skills in playing music, understanding and using musical notation and build performance pieces. During Classes 3 and 4 all students participate in the Strings Program where they learn the violin with a visiting teacher.

Eurythmy

Eurythmy is a performing art where each sound of speech has a specific gesture or movement in space. Indicated by Rudolf Steiner, there are specific movement sequences for the various age groups. Eurythmy sequences are incorporated into Morning Circle routines appropriate to their current main lesson work and developmental stage, and guest tutor workshops may take place through each year.

Physical Education

Children participate in regular physical activity. Our specialist PDHPE teacher delivers an organized program of skills, games and sport, and our school participates in the Sporting Schools Program.

Creative and Performing Arts

A class play is performed yearly by each class. At times, we work on whole-school performances. This can include music and dance elements.

Aboriginal Studies

We invite guest speakers and performing artists to enrich the children's understanding of Aboriginal culture. Classes go to local Aboriginal sites to deepen their connection to Darug, Gundungurra and Wiradjuri Country.

Excursions and camps

Excursions and camps are an integral part of the school's curriculum and specifically of the students' PDHPE learning program. They include:

Kindergarten: Bushwalking and visits to the Bilpin Springs Apple Farm.

Class 1/2: Local excursions & walks and a Class 2 sleep-over.

Class 3/4: Excursions supporting the curriculum over the local region, a 2-night camp and sporting activities.

Class 5/6: Excursions supporting the curriculum. Three 2-night camps over the two-year stage (including to Canberra for studies of Australian Civics), and sporting activities.

Library

Classes visit the library on a regular basis, with the option to borrow books. Class Teachers will advise of library days on the class timetable.

4.4 Homework

Homework is offered to students from Classes 1-6 whenever it will complement in-class learning and takes various forms including practical and activity-based. Examples include project topics related to the current main lesson, practice sheets for senior students regarding concepts already taught during class, and anything addressing a specific learning need (pre-discussed between the Class Teacher and the student/ family). Families are welcome to contact the Class Teacher to discuss any assistance required.

4.5 Participation in NAPLAN

All NSW primary students in Classes 3 and 5 participate in The National Assessment Program- Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). Spread over three days early in Term 2, these tests include reading, writing, language conventions (spelling, grammar and punctuation) and numeracy.

4.6 School Reports & Parent/Teacher meetings

Whole-class Parent/Teacher meetings are held at least once per year for each composite class. At these meetings class curriculum matters are discussed and parents may participate in the artistic activities in which the children are involved.

Individual interviews are arranged in the middle of Term 2, and additionally by phone or in person any time it is deemed helpful for supporting each student. Reports are provided for all students at the end of Terms 2 and 4.

5. Journeys in Community

5.1 Seasonal Celebrations and School Events

We celebrate the changing seasons and pivotal points in the year. These festivals awaken the child's natural reverence for the wonder and beauty of life. These are times when the whole school community comes together, in one way or another.

We celebrate each of the seasons which connect the children with the rhythms of nature and the cosmos, as well as Christmas, Easter and other festivals relevant to our diverse cultural backgrounds. This provides an opportunity for participation by the whole school community. There is joy in the preparation, the anticipation and the celebration itself. The Steiner curriculum is non-denominational and respects the individual beliefs of families.

“On these feast days we feel ourselves impelled to realise our union with earlier humanity, to sink ourselves a little into that which led those of past time out of fullness of heart and soul to place these sign-marks in the course of time which come down to us as the ‘festivals of the year’”

Rudolf Steiner

Open Day and Fair

Each year, the school holds an Open Day. This is a wonderful opportunity to experience our Autumn Harvest or Spring Fair. It is a time to come together as a community to celebrate our beautiful school, meet the teachers and see the children's work and performances. There may also be market stalls, lots of activities for the children, and fabulous food and coffee in a great community atmosphere.

Parents are invited to volunteer some time during the day. We also hold an Early Childhood Centre Open Day (incorporating Playgroup, Preschool and Kindergarten).

Autumn Festival

For the Autumn/Harvest Festival, the produce of the earth is gathered and our labours recognised in a celebration. The oranges, reds and yellows have burst into flame in the deciduous trees, and in various fruits and vegetables such as pumpkins, tomatoes and squash. The fire of summer is passing and now we take its strength inwards and store it away in our reserves to get through winter. As we do this internally in the physical world, we are bottling and preserving the 'sunlight' in our foods for our winter stores. As we look around, we see that the seasonal changes are always a reflection of the divine spiritual world.

St Michael Festival

With the Autumn Equinox there also comes the festival of Michael. The key element of the Michaelmas Festival is that it celebrates inner strength and courage. Through our St Michael play, we hope to encourage children to face their own challenges - in other words, their internal and external dragons. We also hope that the children learn the importance of using courage for the colder, darker winter months ahead.

Details

The St Michael Festival is held towards the end of Term 1 at 5.30pm (around the Autumn Equinox, date determined at the beginning of the year). Classes perform the St Michael Play, their roles determined on which school year they are in. Parents are invited to contribute to the Harvest Table, the contents of which are donated to a local charity after the festival.

Winter Festival

Each year, our Midwinter Festival is held around the shortest day of the year. On this day we celebrate the miracle of light.

On the shortest day, we walk the spiral as an image of this path we are all treading. The spiral is a circle seeking its centre and each of us is on a journey to our own centre. The spiral is a universal form written into the script of nature: from the shell of the humble snail in the garden or the sea shell by the beach, all the way to the vast trail left by mighty galaxies moving through immeasurable space, the spiral is an image of a path to the centre.

Our Midwinter Festival is a day when we gather to celebrate not just the movement of our planet around the sun, but also the pattern that underlies our lives.

Details

Winter Festival is held towards the end of Term 2 at 5.30pm (around the Winter Equinox, date determined at the beginning of the year). **A quiet atmosphere is extremely important for this festival.** On arrival, children go to their classes where they are told a winter story whilst the parents wait quietly at the top of the school. Class 6 start the festival with a Firestick performance. A foliage spiral is laid out on the ballcourt with a candle placed in the middle. Children take the lanterns they have made in class into the spiral to have it lit by the Winter Angel, which then are placed along the spiral upon exiting. Parents are welcome to walk the spiral at the conclusion of the festival before leaving quietly (pending restrictions, of course).

Spring Festival

The Spring Festival is full of the joys and beauty of nature around us. We have the visual delights of nature to help us recognise the new growth around us, and music and dance become a natural expression of the inner joy we feel at recognising the hope of summer after the stillness of winter.

Spring is a call to gratitude. May the inner light of our being add its bright blessing to the world around us. Then we may be co-creators of a renewed world infused with a true love of humanity.

Details

Spring Festival is held on the last day of Term 3, starting at 11.45am. Class 3/4 perform some maypole dances, our orchestra performs and children sing. Parents are invited to bring a picnic lunch, which is followed by traditional spring games on the mini oval. The Festival concludes around 2.30pm.

Summer Festival

In the South, Christmas falls near our Summer Solstice when light is at its strongest. We celebrate the triumph of light at its greatest point in the yearly cycle. The Spirit of the Earth breathes outwards and so do we, for this time often signifies endings in our lives; the end of the year and the tying together of significant stages in our lives.

“This is like a macrocosmic activity to our human microcosm. In our hemisphere it is as if the divine, having breathed out from our hemisphere into the cosmos, draws thence the forces of the universe for the following year”
Cycle of the Year, Lectures by Rudolf Steiner

If we work with this picture we can see there is perpetual but rhythmic renewal. What the Spirit of the Earth brings every year we can partake of. We invite you to celebrate the end of our school year as we breathe out together and build up our strength for what lies ahead.

Details

Summer/Christmas Festival includes a farewell to Class 6 and is held on the last day of Term starting at 11.45am. This festival includes a performance by the School Orchestra, Francine tells a story and finishes with thank-yous and Year 6 Farewell at approximately 1.00pm. Parents are asked to take their children home at this time as the mini-bus does not always run in the afternoon.

5.2 Parent/Carer life at BMSS

Parents perform a very useful role in supporting the classroom and community life of the school. Involvement can include supporting the class teacher with reading, gardening, baking, woodworking, fundraising, craft group, working bees, attending morning teas, or being a member of the Parents Association, School Council or a School Development Team. These are wonderful opportunities to meet other parents and nurture the school community.

There are a number of important traditions within the rhythm of the school year and there is an expectation that parents and carers will make their time and talents available to support the children and ensure these important events are successful. The children are always so excited to see their families involved and your contribution helps to build the social fabric of our school. Some examples include Class 5 parents and carers planning and hosting the Class 6 Farewell, Class 2 hosting the Class 1 morning tea on the first day of school, and helping at Fairs, Open Days and working bees.

Parents/Carers who have a child enrolled in the school are eligible to become members of The Blue Mountains Steiner School Limited. Membership is required to vote at the Annual General Meeting held in Term One each year.

6. Day to Day Information

6.1 Administration

Office hours

The office is open 8am – 4pm during term time. Emails and phone messages are checked regularly during the school holidays.

Communications

- **News Sheet**

Our News Sheet is produced every week and emailed to parents on Friday. This is for general announcements, along with some community services, goods and events advertising.

- **Contacting your child's teacher**

The best method is to first email your child's teacher and allow 48 hours for a response.

Kindergarten:	francine@bluemountainssteiner.nsw.edu.au
Class 1/2:	isabelle@bluemountainssteiner.nsw.edu.au amy.b@bluemountainssteiner.nsw.edu.au soumya@bluemountainssteiner.nsw.edu.au
Class 3/4:	julie@bluemountainssteiner.nsw.edu.au
Class 5/6:	elizabeth@bluemountainssteiner.nsw.edu.au

If the matter is pressing, please send a note with your child. Teachers are available for meetings before school by appointment. In the event of an urgent matter, please contact the Office 4758 6044

- **School website**

Our website: www.bluemountainssteiner.nsw.edu.au contains much information about our school and Steiner education in general.

- **Parent Portal (Edumate)**

Upon commencement of your child's enrolment, you will be issued a user name and password and user guide for our Parent Portal through Edumate. This is the primary source of information about your child's activities at school.

You can access an online version of our News Sheet, along with information about your child's class activities and general school announcements. You are also able to report an absence, give permission for excursions, check dates on the school calendar and more. Please contact office if you require any assistance.

- **Text messaging**

On occasions, a text message may be sent from the office with reminders or urgent information that need to be conveyed. It is essential that the office has

your correct and up to date contact details. It would also be helpful if your mobile phone is on or checked regularly during school hours.

Email

Most correspondence, including term fee invoices will be delivered by email. Please ensure your contact details are kept up to date.

6.2 School fees

The school derives its recurrent or operating expenditure from four main sources:

1. Fees and charges from parents
2. State and Commonwealth funding on a per student basis
3. Capital grants and other special purpose grants from the Commonwealth Government.
4. Fundraising by the PA and other special efforts.

These fees are used to provide income for capital works at the school.

Fees per term are payable **in advance** from the first week of term and must be paid within 14 days unless a prior arrangements in writing have been made with the Finance Committee.

Full fees for a term are payable even when a child is absent from school during that term.

Yearly fee increases are communicated in Term 4 for the following year. Please see our website for current fee schedule

<https://bluemountainssteiner.nsw.edu.au/enrolment>.

Payment options and methods

Blue Mountains Steiner has partnered with specialist provider Edstart to make managing your school fee payments easier. Through Edstart Plus, the school is able to provide flexible payment options to all families for the payment of school fees:

- Pay weekly, fortnightly, monthly, termly or annually by selecting the schedule that works best for you
- Ability to choose your preferred day for when payments are made
- Spread your school fee payments over the full school year
- Option to pay via direct debit, debit/credit card or BPay
- Adjust your repayments at any time
- No credit checks or additional costs to families

To pay your school fees, please set up your account via Visit edstart.com.au/bluemountainssteiner or contact Edstart on 1300 139 445 for assistance.

Extra costs

In addition to school fees are costs of camps, some excursions, swimming lessons and specialist programs such as gymnastics.

Some additional costs will include:

- Class 1 - Moeck or Mollenhauer recorder in Term 1 (around \$67)
- Class 4 – Fountain Pen (around \$20)
- Class 5 – Compass (around \$32)
- Class 3 & 4 – Violin lessons @ \$15 per lesson
- Classes 1-6 – Swimming lessons intensive Term 4 every day for one week (around \$60)

6.3 Attendance

School hours and attendance

9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday to Thursday
9 a.m. to 1p.m. Friday - Kindergarten (optional)
9am – 3pm Friday – Classes 1-6

Teachers are on duty from 8.30am to 3.30pm.

It is very important for children to start on time, a little playtime before school is very healthy for the child's social life and regular lateness or disruption to the morning lesson can become an attendance issue or recorded as unsatisfactory attendance. Again, as above, this can also become a safety issue/concern. The School may be required to report to other authorities under certain circumstances.

Children should be picked up promptly after school. After school play dates should not be on the school grounds. Children have had a long day at school, they may need to wind down, perhaps have afternoon tea, rest, do their homework and be in bed on time for the next day's work. While social time after school is also healthy; we ask that this happens away from the school grounds as playtime has already been in the school arena throughout the day.

If you are running late to pick up your child, please call the school office. Children can wait in the office in this instance. Please also make sure that your child understands this arrangement.

Change of arrangements: Please let the office know if someone else is picking up your children and give your permission and also let us know of any changes to arrangements. Permission needs to be in the form of a signed note or in person (eg a phone call should be in person, a text message would not be acceptable).

Late to school or early departure from school

Late arrival or early departure requires a visit to the School office to obtain a note for your class teacher. In addition, children who are late are to be accompanied to the classroom by their parent/carer so that they arrive promptly and safely once here.

Absent from school

The School is monitored by both the Minister for Education and the NSW Board of Studies regarding student attendance and the management of non attendance.

Education Act 1990 requirements include both parent and school responsibilities.

In short, parents/carers are required to ensure that a child in their care of compulsory school-age is enrolled at and attends school whenever instruction is provided. Parents are also required to explain the absences of their children from school promptly and within seven school days.

Please make sure that you phone the School office before 9am. Phoning the office replaces a note, though you may be required to produce a medical certificate or clearance for certain illnesses. Phoning before 9am helps assure us that your child is safe and also assists the office so that they don't have to chase unexplained absences up by phone throughout the day. Parents are also able to report absences through the parent portal after 10.30am.

How to withdraw enrolment

For a student to be withdrawn from the school once he/she has commenced at Blue Mountains Steiner School, ie for parents/caregivers to end the Enrolment Contract, **the School requires minimum one term's notice.** Parents or caregivers must inform the Principal, School Office and Class Teacher in writing one term in advance if they intend to withdraw their child from the school and end the Enrolment Contract. If no such notification is received, one term's fees will be charged.

Finalisation of the outstanding amounts must be made within a period of four weeks prior to withdrawal. Outstanding fees not paid by the day of departure will be referred to a debt collection agency, the sheriff or school's solicitor for further action, unless a prior written agreement is entered into with the school.

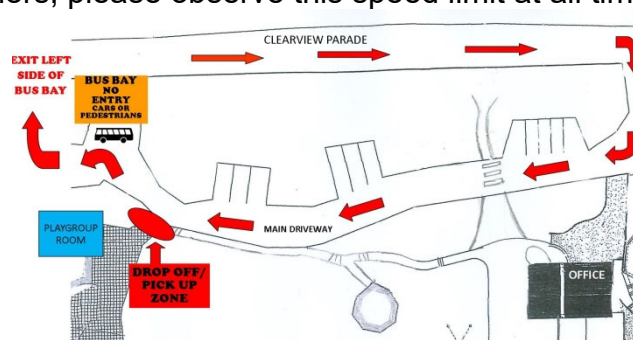
6.4 School Transport Arrangements

Making and changing travel arrangements

If you need to get a message to your child about changed pick up or travel arrangements, please call the office no later than 2.45pm so the message is able to be delivered in time.

Driving to school & parking

There are limited spaces in the school car park for parents to drop off /pick up their child/ren. Please do not use bus bay for dropping off or picking up. We have a pick up/drop off zone – see map below. The speed limit for the car park is 10 km/h and for the safety of others, please observe this speed limit at all times.



Parking on Clearview Parade should be PARALLEL PARKING ONLY in the direction of the traffic. Whilst parking on the nature strip at an angle is more space efficient, it can be dangerous for children who may walk out behind or between cars and are not visible to drivers. This law will be enforced at our school with random visits from the Ranger who will fine drivers not parking within the law \$147.

It would be appreciated if those parking on the “house” side of the street be mindful of our neighbours and their driveways. Please do not move our neighbours’ in order to park your car or park in driveways.

It would also be appreciated if you refrain from parking opposite the bus bay – the big bus driver has trouble swinging into our bus bay if cars are parked on the left hand side of Clearview Parade opposite the driveway.

Bus transportation

The school has its own bus which picks up and drops off the children from the Lower Blue Mountains, including Glenbrook, Blaxland, Warrimoo, Valley Heights and Springwood. Please contact bus driver, Wayne, on 0409 586 044 or the office if there are any changes to the minibus arrangements. Please note that the bus will only travel to bus stops if there are children expected to get on or off the bus at that stop.

Children living between Hazelbrook and Katoomba catch the local private bus service which picks up and drops off at the school. Contact the Blue Mountains Transit Company on (02) 4751 1077 for information and timetable. Student Opal Cards are required and can be applied for at www.opal.com.au.

Bus behaviour

Children are expected to behave in way that is considerate of the driver, other passengers and other road users. Please refer to the Transport Policy for more details.

6.5 Health and Wellbeing at school

Healthy eating

If we work together we can foster, as a community, values about good health and nutrition while also increasing the children’s awareness about protecting our environment in as many ways as possible.

A healthy and substantial breakfast is essential for a great day’s learning. Parents are also asked to provide an adequate amount of healthy food for school daily, and be conscious of using minimal packaging. The children need to bring food for Morning Tea and Lunch. Some classes also have a mid morning snack time. Your class teacher should advise you if this is happening in their class. Please see our Food Policy located on our website or from the office for more details.

The Blue Mountains Steiner School is aware of nut allergies. Our Kindergarten and Preschool are nut free. We adapt our food policy in response to individual student anaphylactic allergies in the primary school.

The importance of sleep

A good night's sleep is vital for supporting every student to engage successfully with their learning and also with their peers. Children need around 10 or even 11 hours of sleep every night. Please ensure your child gets a good night's sleep.

Student wellbeing

The overall wellbeing of your child is essential for being prepared for their school day. Please notify your child's teacher if there are changes to aspects such as the family context or sleep patterns. This will help us to best support your child.

Toys at school

Please leave all toys at home, including trading cards and toys, Lego and any valuable items. Items brought by children for News must be returned to their bag afterwards.

We discourage conversations about digital entertainment at school (movies, games and social media including Tik Tok) as we aim to encourage the children's natural creative play. Our experience has been that digital entertainment discussions can become socially divisive and unequal, and do not align with our ethos as a Steiner School.

Birthday celebrations

Healthy food choices play an important role in all aspects of school life. For this reason, we ask parents to send in platters of fruit and vegetables rather than birthday cakes.

When children are sick

If your child is ill before school *please* keep them at home. Children who are unwell are generally not able to participate effectively in class activities. Children can also become quite distressed when unwell and school is not conducive to the quiet rest, nurturing and healing that a sick child requires. They can also bring infections that may cause other children and staff to become ill. In case of accident or illness at school, if neither parents nor nominated persons can be contacted, staff may consult the child's doctor or the hospital.

Sending medicine to school

Action by Parents

When a child has to take any form of medication at school, a written request, together with a statement of the student's condition and requirements, is to be given by the parent to the School (a copy should be provided to the class teacher and the office). All medicine to be kept in the school office First Aid cupboard. When regular medication is required, detailed advice is to be obtained, through the parent, from the student's doctor.

Action by Office Administrator and Teachers

A list of children on regular medication or with individual health plans will be established and updated regularly. A copy of the list or health plans will be displayed in the office and staffroom. A copy of the updated list will also be kept inside each Class Roll or health plan displayed in the relevant classrooms

Accidents and injuries

Office staff and/or the teacher care for minor injuries and administer first aid as required. An Accident Report Form will be completed when an accident or serious incident occurs, along with a phone call to parents. In an emergency, an ambulance will be called. Parents should be aware of the possibility of symptoms arising after the child has returned home following an accident or incident at school.

Please note that not every scrape or bump will give rise to an Accident Report Form. It is school policy to contact parents in the case of any head injury and/or suspected/reported head injury even if the symptoms are minor.

Immunisation

The Public Health Act requires that all parents provide schools with documented evidence of the immunisation status of children enrolling in schools. The notification takes the form of an Immunisation Certificate which can be issued by: Community Health Staff, Doctor (General Practitioner) or a Medical Officer of health of the local Public Health Unit of obtained off the Centrelink website.

This does not mean that immunisation is compulsory. Parents always have the right to choose. However, in the event of an outbreak of a disease that vaccines may be provided for, the Department of Health will advise the School when unimmunised children are required to remain at home for the duration of the outbreak.

Head Lice

Students are not permitted to attend school if nits or lice are present in their hair. If you find head lice, you must keep your child at home until thorough treatment has been completed and no nits are present. Notify the class teacher or school office immediately so that the rest of the class can be alerted.

Allergies and Anaphylactic reactions

It is imperative that the school be informed of any allergies, especially those with Anaphylactic reactions, along with providing a Health Plan (including a photo). The Health Plans will be displayed in the office and classroom.

Evacuation procedure

In the event that the School receives a warning prior to school start of Severe Fire Danger for our area we may choose to close the School for the day. If a warning of Catastrophic Fire Danger is received we will close the School. Parents will be notified regarding school closure.

Preschool, due to the age of the children may choose to close independently if a severe warning is given and the School is still running. Playgroup may also choose to close but is in a different situation due to the parent to child ratio.

No school services will be allowed to run on school premises if the School is closed.

In the event that children are at school and we have to assemble and/or relocate, depending on circumstances we would either stay inside in the Kindergarten (in the case where there is very little warning) or relocate to Hazelbrook Uniting Church Hall. Our first priority is to look after the safety all of those on site, then parents would be informed as soon as practicable.

It is vital that parents understand not to drive to the school in an emergency.

This is very difficult as it is against our instincts. However, we have been very clearly informed by the RFS that any extra vehicles in the street could seriously contribute to further danger for all those on site or in the process of an evacuation. As well as potentially blocking or clogging up the street when emergency vehicles need fast access, last minute movement in cars has proved to be fatal. We will let you know when it is safe to collect your child/ren from school or from the Uniting Church Hall.

6.6 Clothing

The School's policy on dress is quite liberal and accommodating. Although we do not wear uniforms at our school we do have a dress code that meets our care and safety procedures and reflects our school's philosophy. The following is our dress code:

Dress Code:

- Hats are to be worn for outside play and outside class activities (no hat, no play). Hats should be broad-brimmed to cover the neck and ears.
- Students are to be dressed neatly to encourage a healthy self-concept and pride in the school (holes, tears or tatty clothes are not appropriate).
- Bright and plain coloured practical clothes to be worn are acceptable, with minimal logos, slogans advertising. Please save novelty clothes for weekend.
- As a sun safety issue, skin needs to be covered. Shorts should be closer to the knee than the hip, and shoulders covered (there are now many days of high UV).
- Swimming activities: sun-safe swimwear such as rashies and board shorts or one-piece costumes are to be worn (please no two-piece costumes as these are not sun-safe).
- Shoes should be sturdy and enclosed as a safety matter for the frequent outdoor activities in our bush setting (no flimsy or roller shoes). Gumboots are only for wet weather and a second pair of more practical shoes should be on hand.
- Waterproof coats should always be available in your child's bag (no raincoat, no play).
- No makeup of any kind.
- Any jewellery worn must be minimal eg earrings must be studs or small sleepers, necklaces must be short. This is safety issue.
- Hair should be off the face, and tied back during particular activities.
- Please have a spare set of clothes available in your child's bag.
- Class 5/6 Students may wear one item of black clothing (in the earlier grades we ask that students wear lighter, brighter colours in keeping with the cheerful mood of the early and middle childhood years).

The Blue Mountains is a place of changeable seasons and students should also be dressed with layered clothing and to be prepared for all weathers.

If students do not follow the dress code after several reminders, parents/ carers will be contacted.

6.7 Technology

Mobile phones at school

In certain special circumstances parents/ carers may feel the need for their child to carry a mobile phone to school in order to assist with communication with their child after school. If this is the case, please note that mobile phones need to be dropped off at the office before school each day and picked up from the office after school and that before or after school, the mobile phone remains in the child's bag turned off, until the child has reached either school or their after school destination. Devices are not to be brought to school except by arrangement for Class 5/6 students for the Science and Technology program.

Please refer to the Health and Wellbeing section for our policy regarding discussion about digital media.

7. Helpful School Policies

These policies are available on our website – www.bluemountainssteiner.nsw.edu.au

- Acceptable Use Policy for Mobile Phones
- Child Protection Policy
- Clothing Policy
- Emergency Evacuation Fire Procedures
- Excursions and Other Visits
- Food Policy
- Parent Grievance Policy
- Parent & Carer Code of Conduct
- Pastoral Care and Positive Behaviour Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Raising Matters of Serious Concern
- Student Grievance Policy
- Visitor and Volunteer Policy
- Volunteer Code of Conduct