



## **Remote Learning and Distance Learning Programs**

*2020-2021 School Year*

Academic and connection building activities designed to engage children who are learning from home.

An essential part of the Waldorf curriculum is the warmth of the personal relationships between the children and teachers. When children are not able to interact directly with their peers and their educators, the core pedagogical values of cultivating empathy and social-emotional development becomes harder to nurture.

Collectively, Halton Waldorf School recognizes that, in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, children may not be able to attend school in person. When this is the case, HWS is able to offer remote and distance learning to our students. These alternate plans for Waldorf education will be offered during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our ***remote learning program*** is designed for families whose children will be attending in-person classes for the 2020-2021 school year, but may occasionally miss school due to our COVID-19 student screening protocol. Our ***remote learning*** refers to school being in session, where plans and supports are in place for children who miss classes for a period of time.

In the event of a mandated school closure (as was experienced in the final term of the 2019-2020 school year) all grades will participate to our new ***distance learning program***.

This document overviews both programs.

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### **Remote Learning**

Well children who are at home may access remote learning after a 48 hour absence.

Remote learning programming for Grades 2 through 8 will be available beginning on September 21. To allow time for the new Grade 1 class to adjust to their new learning environment, remote learning for this grade will be available starting September 28.

### **Remote Learning Program, Grades 1 – 3**

The lower grades faculty is excited and grateful to be working in-class with the children this year. Collectively, the grades 1 to 3 teaching faculty acknowledges that we are all still under fluctuating circumstances with respect to the need for well children to self-isolate or quarantine.

When children are healthy and not able to attend school, remote learning packages will be provided. The physical packages will include activities for the child to work through from home, as well as a daily Zoom connection between the children and their teachers.

### **Remote Learning Packages:**

The pedagogically appropriate package gives screened out children the opportunity to engage in daily practice, and skill building. The physical package will feature various activities for the children including:

- Speech-work such as poems, verses, tongue-twisters for recitation
- Seasonal and curriculum related songs and stories
- Math and language practice sheets
- Form drawing exercises
- German and French activities
- Recommendations for related home activities (crafts, handwork, nature, movement)
- Stories from the main lessons to be read or listened to

Remote learning packages will be somewhat tailored to meet the needs of the individual child to ensure success. They will provide familiar content that aligns with each child's class and the themes for the year. They will cover aspects of the material specifically missed during the in-class lessons. Packages will be designed to encourage independent work as much as possible and will contain content that is intended to be comfortably supported by parents.

The format of the remote learning packages will vary according to the grade, skill level and needs of the child. Our faculty members we will work with parents to determine the best way to deliver packages.

Faculty believe that the packages along with the daily connection to their teachers will provide a more nourishing, confidence and skill building opportunity. Daily connection to teachers and the materials will help the children to be able to reintegrate into our in-person routines. The nature of Waldorf education is that consistent recurring review is naturally built into our methodology and anything a child might have missed during their screened-out period will be covered again by the end of the school year.

Once the school is notified of the student absence, packages will be sent home within 48 hours. Each package will cover a two-week period for the child.

### **Daily Zoom Calls:**

Daily Zoom calls will maintain an on-going connection between the child, faculty and other peers who are learning from home. Calls will be made by members of the team of teachers who work with the class including Main Lesson, German, French and Movement faculty members. Zoom calls will occur according to a regular schedule and will provide a social connection and an opportunity to share work completed in their packages. Once the school is notified of the student absence, Zoom calls will commence within 48 hours

### **Parent Support:**

Before remote learning commences, the class teacher will hold a meeting for parents to share their intentions for the packages of the grade level as well as offer instructions and advice for parents to enable the best support for children exploring remote learning.

The school has also designated a faculty member to support our remote learning packages in Grades one to three. Parents may choose to connect with this faculty member when they have questions or need support with their packages.

Offering a remote learning program is a new initiative of the school intended to support our families during the pandemic. Faculty and families will engage in a review process towards the end of October.

### **Why not live-stream Grades 1 – 3 classes?**

When considering live streaming for the grade school, HWS faculty collectively agreed that the needs of the younger children differ from the older children in the school. Considering child development, pedagogical needs and overall effectiveness of technology for the young child, we have decided that physical packages will be better suited for the younger grades.

To better understand why we have chosen a different way of connecting we share the following:

- Children at this stage of development require in-person support to best succeed at and internalize the school activities they engage in. In-class that support is provided by the teacher first and foremost, who not only delivers content but is watching carefully to ensure a student's successful articulation of that content; at this age, teacher support includes things as varied as practicing proper pencil grip, learning to lengthen their attention spans, proper posture, and, often, actively guiding a student's movements and drawings individually.
- In the classroom, the teacher builds support between the students who, when working together, create a momentum for learning and engagement that every individual in the group is balanced by. This is difficult to replicate from behind a screen.
- Live streaming for the younger grades would remove all the context of that learning momentum and the careful one-on-one support that ensures that each child reaches their full potential for learning on any given day.
- Taking our in-class lessons out of this context would result in children feeling left out and risks a loss of confidence in their own learning and abilities.
- For the young child computer or screen use can actively detract from their confidence in the work that they are doing and can lead to a "passive" engagement where the children are not, in fact, learning at all. It is more effective for the child to tune into the presence of the people who are around them.

### **Remote Learning Program, Grades 4 – 8**

The faculty are looking forward to teaching the children in person at school and recognize the need to support those who cannot attend for periods of time, due to these extenuating circumstances. When children are healthy and not able to attend school, remote learning will be available for our grades 4 through 8 students. This program will take place via live-streaming a selection of lessons from inside the classroom. This will allow the child at home to participate in real time and interact with their teachers.

Each classroom has been equipped with a camera and microphone for the teacher. The cameras have been installed in such a way as to protect the privacy of the children in the classroom – cameras are focused on the teacher and the blackboard, and will not be aimed at the desk area of the classroom. There will also be a laptop, which will allow the teachers to interact with any children who are learning from home.

Children attending classes in person will need time to enter the classroom, wash their hands, and settle at their desks. As such, live-streamed classes will cover a portion of each class offered, including Main Lesson. The streaming schedule and timing for live-streamed lessons will be shared in advance with families.

Should a teacher feel the need to shut the camera and microphone off for a period of time during a live-streamed lesson, they will do so at their discretion.

The class teacher will check in weekly with families who are at home, to see how things are going and if any adjustments are required.

#### **Live-Streamed Classes for Grades 4 and 5**

- A section of the Main Lesson (including new material and recall) will be live-streamed. Some sections of Main Lesson – such as movement outdoors – are not conducive to live-streaming.
- One to two Extra Main periods per week
- French or German – as these classes are being offered in rotating blocks this year, a child will have either French OR German during their absence.
- If Grade 5 students are in a French block, they will join the tutorial sessions led by the teacher, as outlined in the Grades 6-8 section below.

#### **Live-Streamed Classes for Grades 6-8**

- A section of the Main Lesson (including new material and recall) will be live-streamed. Some sections of Main Lesson – such as movement outdoors – are not conducive to live-streaming.
- Two to four Extra Main/Track periods per week
- French – this will take the shape of tutorial sessions. A set time will be arranged for a study group for any absent Grade 5-8 students. This multi-grade group will meet via Zoom with the teacher.

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#### **Distance Learning Program** *(only as mandated)*

If we are required to close the school, the teachers will be prepared to switch to distance learning once again. Each teacher will have prepared lessons that suit this type of learning.

The school will close for a period of two school days, to allow the faculty to transition their lessons into a virtual format.

During Distance Learning:

- Subject and class teachers will engage the will of the children through movement and rhythmic work when possible.
- Teachers may use some pre-recorded instructions in subjects such as handwork as well as short online support sessions.
- Pictures and writing will be available that allow the students to view the material clearly.
- Parents and caregivers are encouraged to be in regular, open communication with their teachers for the duration of the school closure.
- Our faculty will have training on Google Classroom to ensure continuity for all grades in the delivery of material to the students.
- Arrangements can be made to set up small group sessions for students who need extra support with online learning, to ensure they are able to progress in their lesson work and do not fall behind.
- Pick-up and drop-off times for class work and materials will be carefully orchestrated to avoid congestion in the school building.

### Grades 1-3 Distance Learning

In the early grades we aim to ensure students receive as close to a regular Waldorf experience as possible, and to keep screen time to a minimum. The online school day will start at 8:30am and finish at 12:30pm. Parents and or caregivers may be required to be available for direction and tech support.

A regular, dedicated space for the students to attend to their daily schoolwork will be an important aspect of their routine for this time. Teachers will provide weekly materials by Noon on Sunday with the schedule.

We are expecting the students to attend all their classes and to complete the work that is assigned to allow the teachers to assess and follow-up with you as needed. The partnership between the parent and the teacher is essential for maintaining the standards and progress of the children's education. For the children in the lower grades, distance learning may include the following:

- Pre-recorded audio or video stories, lessons, verses and songs, may be used to aid the children in learning the material while lessening screen time. Lessons can be replayed if needed.
- There will be more time between the online periods to have a break from the screen.
- Updates and communication between families and teachers will be maintained through:
- A clear and precise plan, structure and expectations for the school day, which will be provided by the class and subject teachers.
- Regular communication will continue between teachers and parents. Teachers can be reached via email and will respond within 24 hours during the work week. Individual conversations between parents and teachers can be arranged as needed.
- Individual arrangements with the families whose children struggle with screens and online work can be made between parents and teachers.
- We will adapt programs as needed and as conditions change.

### Grades 4-8 Distance Learning

The online school day will start at 8:50am and finish at 1:40pm for grades 4 and 5 and from 9am – 2:30pm for grades 6 to 8.

Depending on the child, parents and caregivers may need to be available for direction and support. A regular, dedicated space for the students to attend to their daily schoolwork will be an important aspect of their routine for this time. Parents can expect teachers to provide weekly material in accordance with the schedule.

We are expecting the students to attend all of their classes and to complete the work that is assigned to allow the teachers to assess and follow-up with you as needed. The partnership between the parent and the teacher is essential for maintaining the standards and progress of the children's education.

- A clear understanding of the structure and expectations of the school day will be provided by the class and subject teachers.
- Older grades may have more project and independent work as is appropriate for the age group.
- The workload for the students will be reasonable and clearly communicated. Work must be handed in for marking when required.
- Subjects such as handwork and music may use pre-recorded instructions and group Zoom assistance by the teacher.
- We will adapt programs as needed and as conditions change.
- Academic Expectations:
- Academic progress and benchmarks will be upheld during this time.
- Teachers expect all students to attend to their lessons.

- Individual arrangements with the families whose children struggle with screens and online work can be made between parents and teachers.
- There will be on-going evaluations as would usually be expected for the grade level. Evaluations and reports are necessary and will be based on submitted work and participation.

### Sample Schedules – Distance Learning

<b>Grade 1 to 3 – Distance Learning</b> <i>Sample Schedule:</i>	Time
<b>Main Lesson</b> - 20 minutes via Zoom followed by independent desk work	<b>8:30</b>
Break	9:45
<b>Subject</b>	<b>10:00</b>
Break	10:30
<b>Subject</b>	<b>11:00</b>
Break	11:30
<b>Subject</b>	<b>12:00</b>
Lunch (end of the day)	12:30

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<b>Grade 4 and 5 – Distance Learning</b> <i>Sample Schedule:</i>	Time
<b>Main Lesson</b> 30 to 40 minutes via Zoom followed by independent desk work	<b>8:50</b>
Break	10:50
<b>Subject</b>	<b>11:00</b>
Break	11:40
<b>Subject</b>	<b>12:00</b>
Lunch	12:30
<b>Subject</b>	<b>1:00</b>
End of lessons – complete outstanding work and suggested time outdoors in the afternoon	1:40

<b>Grade 6 to 8 – Distance Learning</b> <i>Sample Schedule:</i>	Time
<b>Main Lesson</b> 2 x 40 minute lessons via Zoom followed by independent desk work	<b>9:00</b>
Break	11:00
<b>Subject</b>	<b>11:30</b>
Lunch Break	12:15
<b>Subject</b>	<b>1:00</b>
<b>Subject</b>	<b>1:40</b>
End of lessons – complete outstanding work and suggested time outdoors in the afternoon	2:30

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## **HWS Remote and Distance Learning – Student Code of Conduct**

Participation in the remote and distance learning programs of Halton Waldorf School imposes certain responsibilities and obligations on students. Access to the programs is a privilege and requires all students to behave responsibly and respectfully while online and learning from home. Our code of conduct represents the expectations of Halton Waldorf School for students participating in the virtual lessons.

### **Students will:**

- arrive on time and be prepared for all scheduled meetings and classes
- respect the HWS dress code
- communicate with faculty with the same degree of respect that is required in a traditional school setting.
- be active and engaged in the lessons
- follow my teachers' guidelines for the use of video conferencing
- consider whether any comments or posting may reflect poorly on me, my friends or the school
- not post, publish or display any defamatory, abusive, obscene, threatening, intimidating, racially offensive, homophobic, sexist material or otherwise discriminate
- not record or take a picture of anyone on video conferencing
- alert school staff if I see other students being threatened, intimidated or bullied online
- be transparent and authentic
- not create a false identity or impersonate any person or organization for any reason, or encourage others to do so
- avoid impulsive, inappropriate or heated comments at all times
- respect the privacy and confidentiality of personal information of other members of the community

## **HWS Remote and Distance Learning Copyright**

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