



Rosebud Garden Handbook



Main Campus:

410 West Seven Stars Rd

Phoenixville, PA 19460

610-933-3635

Rosebud Garden:

221 Hickory Grove Rd

Phoenixville, PA 19460

610-935-4971

Nurturing the Developmental Needs of the Young Child

Our goal is to provide a safe, calm, beautiful environment that is filled with love and warmth! An environment where your child will be supported and guided in his or her physical, emotional, and social development. We aim to support parents with parenting through our regular offerings of articles, reading suggestions, parent meetings and conferences, and ongoing conversations.

Welcome to Kimberton Waldorf School's Rosebud Garden, where children ages two to four years come together to joyfully play and participate in activities that are nurturing and rhythmical in a home-like setting. We are located in the Rosebud Garden House at 221 Hickory Grove Road in Phoenixville, PA. We offer full, half, and extended day programs, Mondays through Fridays.

General information regarding the school can be found on our website, and specific school announcements will be included in the weekly school newsletter.

We hope this booklet will serve as an introduction to Rosebud Garden and acquaint you with information that we feel is important for your child's environment and wellbeing.

Please keep this booklet as a reference, and feel free to ask any questions you may have.

Blessings on our year together!

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Rhythm

From the moment of birth, a child's life is regulated by rhythm—for example, breathing in and breathing out, or sleeping and waking. We are surrounded by rhythm in nature through day and night, the seven days of the week, the monthly moon phases, and the cycle of the year. When children experience a healthy rhythm, their lives are imbued with security and good discipline.

In Rosebud Garden, we are guided by daily, weekly, and seasonal activities which will provide this essential opportunity for your child. Each morning there is a time for creative play during which the teachers also engage with the children in daily/weekly activities such as crayoning, washing, and soup-making. This rhythmical way of life, which children long for, deeply nourishes their play and learning.

In Rosebud Garden, attention is given to celebrating autumn, winter, spring, and summer—not only through festivals, but also during our circle time and story time.

When a child's rhythm in Rosebud is supported at home with a nurturing rhythm (such as mealtime and bedtime routines), his or her early childhood will be a rich and harmonious one.

Arrival and Departure

Rosebud Garden begins at 8:00 am. Beginning the day together establishes a good rhythm for your child as well as the class. Please keep in mind that lateness makes it all the more difficult for your child to integrate into play.

Our half-day program ends at 12:00 pm, while our full-day program ends at 3:00 pm, and our extended-day program ends at 5:00 pm. For your child's welfare, please be prompt. Your lateness can cause unnecessary stress and worry for your child. If you are unavoidably delayed, please call us at 610.935.4971 so that we can assure your child and make necessary arrangements. If your child is to be picked up by someone other than yourself, please let us know by sending a note or telephoning as soon as possible.

Please call us at 610.935.4971 no later than 7:45 am to report the reason for absence. You may leave a message if we are unable to answer the phone. We will make every effort to support you in keeping your child healthy. We also urge working parents to arrange backup child-care for these special situations.

For everyone's safety, please do not leave your car's engine running in the parking lot when dropping off or picking up your child.

Dressing for Rosebud Garden

Rosebud Garden is an active environment; clothing which is loose fitting, practical, and comfortable can best withstand play and work. Natural fibers allow the child's body to breathe properly and be kept warm. Every morning we spend almost an hour outside, so please have your child dressed appropriately for the weather.

We ask that the children do not wear clothing with pictures or writing of any kind because of the influence these items have on play and attentiveness in group settings. Clothing should be solid in color or a striped or patterned fabric. Please, no camouflage clothing.

What to bring to school (please also refer to the 'Rosebud Extra Clothes List'):

- Indoor slippers

- Change of clothing (socks, underwear, undershirts, pants, top, tights, and an extra dress or skirt)

- Sun hat

- Seasonally appropriate sweater

- Raincoat with hood or rain hat, rain pants, and rain boots

- Woolen underwear for cold weather

- Winter hat, mittens, snow jacket, snow pants, and warm snow boots

- Water bottle during warm weather

Jewelry of any kind (such as watches, earrings, necklaces, and elaborate hair clips/bands) should not be part of school attire. These items are distracting to our activities and are often lost. In the interest of safety, we especially do not recommend wearing dangling earrings. In keeping with age-appropriate education, please avoid sending your child with painted fingernails or other bodily decorations, such as tattoos.

Rosebud Garden Rhythm

For exiting to the parking lot, please use the garden gate (instead of the ramp). Please do not allow children to play or run around in the parking lot. Please do not leave your car's engine running when dropping off or picking up.

8:00	Our Day Begins (arriving and putting on indoor slippers, a morning activity is part of our rhythm, along with indoor play)
9:30	Snack Time
10:00	Outside Playtime
11:45	Coming Inside (bathrooming and washing hands)
12:00	Half-Day Dismissal

12:00	Lunch
12:30	Lunch Clean-Up
1:00	Nap Time
2:30/2:45	Nap Time Ends (children rising, a light snack, and then preparing to go outside)
3:00	Full-Day Dismissal
5:00	Extended-Day Dismissal

Weekly Practical Life Activities

Domestic Activities (These activities take place during morning playtime)

Washing

Ironing

Polishing

Bread making

Window cleaning

Fruit & Vegetable chopping

Watering indoor plants

Dusting and mopping

Weeding and gardening care

Mulching

Sawing & sanding wood

Weekly/Seasonal Artistic Activities

Watercolor painting

Crayoning

Seasonal craft activities

The Purposeful Work of Rosebud Garden and the Importance of Play

There is a growing body of research that supports the position, as Waldorf schools do, that preschool children should remain in play-oriented early childhood environments. Why is play such an important aspect of a child's development and growth? To help bring some insight to the answer to this question, let us look further in quick simple vignettes at the progression of play in the two to four-year-old.

For the two-year-old, play is doing what the adult does—fantasy has not yet entered, while the three-year-old is generally full of fantasy and imagination. The play of three-year-olds is ever changing and they are inspired by whatever comes into their hands. For the three-year-old, a single object will transform in their imagination and change its meaning many times during play. Their play is always in the process of changing and becoming. Even though a four-year-old's inspiration for play comes about from what catches his or her eye, there is more constancy in the four-year-old's play. They can build a house, a boat, or train, for example, and stay in that play for a much longer period of time.

Research shows that when we start children too soon on academic subjects, we interfere with this process of development and the imagination does not seem to fully develop.

Our goal in Rosebud Garden is to create a beautiful, play-oriented environment where your child's imagination and creativity will flourish. The quality of the environment in Rosebud Garden is integral to our goal. Natural materials such as wood, cotton, silk, and wool help in creating a feeling of warmth and security and even the curtains transmit a warm glow into the rooms. Wooden toys, which have been carefully selected, are there for your child to use to imitate and transform the activities that belong to everyday adult life. Your child can then enter, breathe easily, and play.

Not only is our environment supportive of the young child's dreamy, playful approach to life, but Rosebud Garden's rhythm and repetition will give your child a real sense of security.

Speaking and Movement and the Young Child

“It is not moral preaching and not reasoned instruction that work on children in the right way: that which works is what the adults in their surroundings do visibly before their eyes.”
Rudolf Steiner

The way young children imitate can be likened to the way they digest the food we offer them. They simply take it in, and depending on its nutritional value, they will either be nourished or underfed. When we think of speaking and the young child we can use this understanding of imitation. If we want our young child to do something, we provide him or her with an example to imitate by doing the deed ourselves. The young child simply lives into our actions and makes them his or her own. With the many tasks in our daily lives, we can bring as much consciousness as we can to each task. As parents, we can support the healthy development of our young child through our own speech and body movements. In our gestures, we can be unhurried and gentle, and in our speech, we can use few words, clear speech, and few questions.

Creative Free Playtime:

Why it is so important and how we can encourage it

The foundations for creative play are laid in the earliest months and years of life. With simple toys, a child’s play is imaginative and rich. Imaginative play is transformed into creative and independent thought that is needed for later intellectual learning.

Free and imaginative play is seen as being crucial to children’s healthy physical, emotional, and social development. Research shows that there are strong relationships between a child’s ability to play imaginatively and his or her overall development. A child who can play will grow into a creative adult.

In this light, it is only helpful to be aware of the effects of media on your young child (television, videos, movies, audio tapes, discs, computers, and computer games—anything with screens!). There is a growing awareness in our society that media, in all its forms, produces harmful effects in children.

We can support and nourish imaginative play simply by choosing open-ended toys, for they give far more possibilities for creative play than perfectly representative ones. Basic objects like smoothed timber, pinecones, and blankets can be creatively transformed. On the contrary, a perfect plastic piece of pizza is more difficult to creatively transform. Objects created from natural materials, like wooden toys and handmade dolls, have a special quality. Toys made from natural materials have qualities of life and warmth. They are in harmony with nature and often have been lovingly made by the human hand. These natural materials enhance a child’s capacity to live imaginatively into

their play. Like health-giving food, toys made of natural materials can nourish a child.

The very young child does not play imaginatively yet, as this requires the development of memory. Memory and the capacity for creative imagination and image-linking arise as a result of the learning of language. This normally happens in the second to third year. Since young children naturally imitate everything in their environment, adults can encourage strong imitation by cheerfully carrying out simple everyday and creative tasks of life around their young child.

Painting and Crayoning

Wet-on-Wet Watercolor Painting

“One of the best ways to experience color is through painting with watercolors on wet paper. Colors are in their own true element in water. We only have to see a rainbow to realize that we experience wonder and awe. Color in a thin sea of water can move, mingle, change, lighten and darken, just like our feelings and emotions.

...Pre-school children are totally unself-conscious, absorbing the experience. It is the doing that is important, and not what it is, or how good it is.”

-Letitia Costain, Steiner National Parent and Child representative

On wet watercolor paper with a wide painting brush, we will explore colors that speak to the seasons. We will experience painting, not out of artistic instruction, but as the movement of pure colors (we use only the three primary colors). This painting experience is best suited to the young child’s developmental stage. As we paint together, the children work out of imitation. They will also be experiencing the feeling quality of each of the primary colors. Children love color and when they are painting, they become absorbed with the color and what is happening as the colors flow on the wet paper.

Crayoning

Out of imitation of adults, children will pick up crayons and draw. Children often start drawing before their second year. Their first attempts at drawing are lines (scribbles), which seem to dance across the paper in loops, sweeping curves, and sharp corners.

Young children live in movement and rhythm and this is visible in their drawings. After age three, as the imagination of the young child unfolds, they ‘take hold,’ so to speak, of their drawings and will begin to describe the images on their paper.

In Rosebud Garden, the children will experience drawing with beautiful crayons made with the

colors of nature and are shaped in a block form. Not only are these crayons best suited to the young child's hand, they have clarity of color and they also a natural aroma; they are wonderful for the young child's senses.

Bread-Making

One of the most natural materials for modeling is homemade bread dough. The children will experience first grinding the grain that will be used to knead our dough. Every bread-making day, we will mix all the ingredients for our bread and then knead our dough together. When our bread rolls have been formed, they will be left to rise and then baked. We will enjoy our bread rolls on Wednesdays for snack time.

Making bread together is a wonderful human activity that connects us to the earth, and bread out of the oven has one of the most comforting smells.

This activity also provides an opportunity for the awakening intelligence of the child to penetrate into his or her fingers. The manual dexterity and eye/hand coordination that results from this activity is essential for later academic work, yet to the young child, this is all play.

Rhythm, Repetition, Reverence

We come together to enjoy the food we have helped to prepare. There is an emphasis on gratitude for the food, and on table manners. As teachers, we provide an example for the development of a lifelong social skill.

Our lunch time is most honored when it is in an atmosphere of quietness. A candle is lit while we sing a blessing song for the food before it is served. At this moment, there is a peaceful mood that is present. We then enjoy our food together. Lunch is also a time when we enjoy being in community while eating our food.

After we have eaten, the children remain at the table together until all the bowls and cups have been collected and then we say a thank you for the food while extinguishing the candle.

We will all gather on the red circle rug to sing songs and do our circle movements and finger plays together. Many of our songs will be seasonal and we will enjoy many movement activities with the children.

Repeating and remembering verses sets the stage for the more intense memory work that will be required in grade school. Repetition is also a foundation for healthy brain development. Rhyming sounds and alliteration educate the ear, thus forming the beginnings of spelling and phonics.

After our circle time, we will all go outside together for about 45 minutes. We will dress appropriately for the weather and go outside when we have all the necessary outside clothing on.

We go outside as a group to experience nature and the seasons together. Gardening is also a valued part of our outdoor time. Watching as plant life grows from seed to flower to fruit and then passes on—this is all part of the life process. Outdoor time is also a time for playing in the sandbox, raking, pushing the wooden wagons, climbing on the wooden logs, playing, and exploring in Briar Rose Forest.

There are many benefits to be gained from telling stories to young children. The warm weaving of the human voice provides a sense of security. Words are learned by being recognized again and again; listening skills are developed, as is memory. Also, the young child's developing memory is fed with rich pictures, which encourages the imagination.

Language Arts in a Waldorf early childhood setting has long been successful in cultivating fluid expression through exposure to larger vocabularies than programs based on worksheets and early reader books. The content of the stories also affords an opportunity for the children to experience language in a very beautiful form.

Media

There is a growing awareness in our society that media, in all its forms, produces harmful effects in children even beyond the content and time given to it. We have found that this influence significantly interferes with what Waldorf early childhood programs have to offer the young child. Childhood is a time to learn through activity, nature, playing creatively, and integrating socially. In order to enhance your child's development, we ask that you eliminate the influence of media from your young child's life.

The quality of your child's Rosebud Garden experience depends on your commitment in this matter and in supporting the school in your home life. So does the integrity of your choice to send your child to Kimberton Waldorf School, which takes a stand on media.

Parents who are making sacrifices to keep their children at the school also depend on your cooperation regarding this issue. For those parents who are confronting this issue for the first time, we are interested in being of help and supportive in any way we can.

(Please see the reading list for more information on this subject).

Policy: Videotaping and Photography

No videotaping or photographing is permitted during events such as festivals and birthday celebrations (unless otherwise indicated by the teacher). Young children fully engage themselves in every activity. Focusing cameras on them interrupts this process, making them self-conscious and

leading them away from spontaneous participation.

Also, please leave cell phones behind. They are disruptive to the mood we are trying to create at these times. We appreciate your cooperation.

Warmth

Warmth is the balancing between cold and heat. The young child does not yet have a developed feeling for warmth. This ability takes almost seven years to mature. One of the greatest gifts we can give our children is physical warmth, as well as the warmth of our soul. It is important to provide young children with layers of wool (or silk for very sensitive skin). Cotton underwear is suitable in very warm weather when there is not much variation in temperature, while wool is most suitable as an under layer in cooler and cold months. In this way, we assist in strengthening the forces of immunity, which helps our children grow into adults who understand one aspect of what the body needs to be healthy.

Sleep

The quality of a child's sleep life has a deep effect on his wellbeing during the day. "Early to bed and early to rise" is a good rule of thumb. A preschool child generally requires 12 hours of sleep (7:00 pm to 7:00 am, for example) in order to be fully rested for the activities of the following morning. A regular bedtime surrounded by a calming ritual is an important habit to establish for the young child. We will be happy to discuss bedtime routines with you if you have any questions.

Children thrive in an environment of simplicity and beauty, and they absorb the impressions around them. Conscious care to your child's playthings in the first six or seven years of life provides a rewarding experience for the child and parent.

A few simple, natural playthings will help enliven your child's creative play; with simple toys, a child's play is imaginative and rich. Imaginative play is transformed into creative and independent thought that is needed for later intellectual learning.

Why wooden toys?

Wood has qualities of life and warmth. Playing with wooden toys enhances a child's capacity to live imaginatively into their play. The toys invite the child to touch and experience the wood; the child is nourished by the toys. There is a quality of reverence and respect. With wooden toys, a child's mind and heart can become fully engaged, allowing for the possibility to truly live into their play.

Please encourage your child to keep his or her personal toys, books, and other playthings at home, as bringing these to school can cause awkward situations among the children. Food (especially gum or candy) should not be brought to school.

If you find crystals, beeswax, seashells, gnomes, crayons, etc. in your child's pocket when he or she comes home, please do not be alarmed. Simply have your child return them to school the next day.

Health

Your teachers share with you a deep concern for your child's physical health. The best environment for a sick child is to be resting at home. If a child is not well enough to participate in all school activities, including going outdoors, then he or she should be kept at home. If your child has had a fever, please keep him or her home for at least another 24 hours after the fever has subsided, with no fever reducers, so that he or she can fully recuperate. Please do not bring your child to school if they are medicated unless you have discussed it with your child's teacher.

We also ask that a child receiving antibiotic medication be kept home for a minimum of three days so that he or she can recover in a healthy way. It is important that an ill child remain in a quiet and restful environment while ill.

The State of Pennsylvania requires that each child have a completed health and immunization form on file in the school office (the form provides a space for a statement from parents concerning religious or moral exemption from immunization, if applicable). Also, it is important that up-to-date emergency information be on file so that the appropriate persons may be contacted in case of emergency if the parent is unreachable.

Any child who has an infection or communicable disease must remain at home. Please let us know if your child has contracted a communicable illness, so we may give necessary information to other parents.

If you believe or feel that your child may have been exposed to a communicable disease, please see your doctor first (and call your child's teacher) before returning to school even if your child is free of symptoms. This will support us in helping to keep everyone as healthy as possible.

Parent Participation

We encourage parent participation in the seasonal life of Rosebud Garden. During the course of the year, festivals will be celebrated and parent involvement plays an important role. The festivals are connected to the seasons and we will notify you of the dates well in advance.

During the year, individual parent conferences are held. These conferences present opportunities for teachers to share their observations of your child's development and for

parents to share their experiences and challenges.

Attendance at parent meetings, workshops, and study groups when offered is highly encouraged. These are opportunities to explore and learn more about your child's school experience and Waldorf education in the early years as a foundation for life.

Birthdays

Celebrating your child's birthday in Rosebud is given much thought and care. Parents, brothers, sisters and grandparents are invited to attend for part of the morning. We make each child's birthday celebration at school special. The teacher tells a beautiful birthday story at story time, and after the story we sing our birthday song. At snack time, after the story, the birthday child continues to be celebrated with a special birthday snack. At this joyful occasion the birthday child receives a special gift from the teacher and birthday wishes from his or her classmates and teachers.

"Snow Days"

In the event of a school closing, delayed opening or early dismissal, an all-school message will be sent via text and email from the school office to inform you of a school closing, delayed opening or early dismissal. Our website will be updated as well. School closings and delayed openings may be checked via KYW1060AM or NBC channel 10. Kimberton Waldorf School's closing number is 867.

Withdrawal

The Early Childhood faculty reserves the right to ask that a child be withdrawn if, in the judgment of the faculty, the child is unable to become a harmonious member of the group activities, or is not ready for separation from his or her home environment, or because of lack of parent cooperation with our policies.

Aggressive Behavior Policy

For the safety and well-being of the individual child, the other children in the class, and the teachers, any child who is exhibiting tantrum behavior (kicking, shouting, throwing things or repeated defiance) or other potentially dangerous behaviors (i.e. running away, hiding) will be removed from the classroom to a quiet space.

The teacher or assistant will call the Office and the Office Manager will find someone to come remove the child and take him or her to an available room. The child will be spoken to calmly and given time to recover him or herself. In most cases, it will be in the best interest of the child and the class to send him/her home. Aggressive or violent behavior toward another child or an adult cannot be tolerated, and the child will be sent home immediately.

The teacher will call the child's parents in the evening to discuss the incident so the parents have a full and accurate understanding of what happened, and so the teacher can learn from the parents whether there are any circumstances at home that might be contributing to the behavior.

If the child has to be sent home on a regular basis, and if frequent conversations with the parents and measures being taken to help the child are not making a difference, the situation will be referred to the Child Care Committee. The CCC will consider what actions or assessments may be appropriate to determine the underlying issues and whether KWS has the professional staff, programs and facilities to protect everyone involved and to help the child resolve the challenging behaviors.

Once decisions have been made, there will be a conference with the parents to review the findings and recommendations and to discuss possible next steps.

Recommended Reading List

Heaven on Earth- Sharifa Oppenheimer
How to create the Star of Your Family Culture- Sharifa Oppenheimer
Simplicity Parenting- Kim John Payne
The Soul of Discipline- Kim John Payne
Walking with Our Children- Nancy Blanning
Understanding Waldorf Education- Jack Petrash
Child Development Year by Year- waldorfearlychildhood.org
The Child and the Machine – Alison Armstrong and Charles Casement
You Are Your Child's First Teacher – Rahima Baldwin
Festivals, Family and Food – Diana Carey and Judy Large
Lifeways–Working with Family Questions – Gudrun Davy and Bons Voors
The Hurried Child – David Elkind
Miseducation: Preschoolers at Risk – David Elkind
A Guide to Child Health – Michaela Glockler and Wolfgang Goebel
Endangered Minds–Why Children Can't Think – Jane Healy
Failure to Connect – Jane Healy
Your Child's Growing Mind – Jane Healy
Childhood – Jane Healy
Caroline von Heydebrand Toymaking with Children – Freja Jaffke
Work and Play in Early Childhood – Freja Jaffke
Who's Bringing Them Up? – Martin Large
Challenge of the Will – Margret Meyerkort and Rudi Lissau
Beyond the Rainbow Bridge – Barbara Patterson and Pamela Bradlee
Incarnating Child – Joan Salter
The Plug-In Drug – Marie Winn
Education Towards Freedom – Anthroposophic Press