

- Parent Handbook** Our Parent Handbook is linked in this Orientation Package. Please refer to *Appendix 1* for Practical Details about our Early Childhood programs, including pedagogy, hours, clothing, nutrition, toys, extra-curricular activities, illness (including a Covid-19 update), safety, and our Behaviour Guidance & Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Opening Assembly** **Tuesday, September 8 at 11:30 am** all families are invited to attend a special all-school virtual opening assembly to learn about what students can look forward to in this school year. Please register in advance at https://ca01web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_88MV4HOF52CXzIXbK_h3yQ.
- Emergency Contact & Health Information** Before your child may attend class, we require that you log on to vws.bigsis.com/portal/ to update your Emergency Contact & Health Information.
- On the main page, select the **Parents** tab at the top
 - Click the Request for Information tab
 - Select **Fill out Form** or **Update** (separate forms must be completed for each child)
 - **Claim** & complete form (don't forget to submit at the end)
- Our Administrative staff will be on hand to assist you during the week of August 31 – September 4, the afternoon of September 9 and all day on September 10.
- Calendar** In this package you will find the Important Dates & Closures Calendar which will enable you to mark your personal calendar with upcoming events well in advance. We encourage you to refer to the Current Newsletter, Week at a Glance emails and our school [website](#) for calendar updates and events.
- Clothing** Warmth is of great importance to the healthy development of the young child. We will play outside every day in all weather, rain or shine. Please ensure that your child has the following, CLEARLY MARKED with their name:
- Waterproof raingear appropriate to the time of year (coat and rain pants)
 - Waterproof boots, lined for the winter months
 - Hats are required outerwear, sunhat or wool hat as appropriate

- A full change of clothes in a cloth bag that will be left at school. Including 1 pair of pants, 1 shirt, 1 sweater, 2 pairs of socks/tights, 2 pairs of underwear.
- Simple indoor slippers that children can put on themselves, that will stay at school.

**First 7 Years
Seminar Series**

At the Vancouver Waldorf School, we understand that a child’s experiences in the first seven years set a foundation for life. This seminar series runs weekly, between September 15 and November 3 via webinar and we encourage you to attend the series as a whole.

Topics include *Incarnating Child, Child Development I & II, Twelve Senses, Fairy Tales & Media, Healing Power & Mystery of Sleep, Nutrition, Free Play, Guidance & Discipline.*

Registration information is on our website www.vws.ca/community/parent-learning/

Photo

If you have not already done so, please forward a recent photo of your child for their file. You may take one on your phone and email it to admissions@vws.ca.

Drop-off/Parking

The school parking lot will be closed to all parents except for those with babe in arms. Please plan to arrive early to park in the neighbourhood and walk your child to class.

**Learning Groups/
Cohorts**

In order to ensure the safe return to full-time in-class instruction in September, the Provincial Health Officer has recommended the use of cohorts or Learning Groups to control the number of close, in-person interactions for individuals. This model will reduce the number of people each student or staff member comes into close contact with, thereby reducing the risk of transmission and ensuring quicker contact tracing by health authorities.

Per the Ministry of Education, K- 12 Education Restart Plan, the majority of elementary schools will return to full-time, in-class instruction with minimal modifications to school structures or timetables. At our High School, we are fortunate that its relatively small population has enabled similar minimal modifications and the ability to also return to full-time, in-class instruction.

Cohorts are groups of students and staff who primarily interact with each other. We have chosen to use the term “cohort” rather than Learning Group and have structured our cohorts based on the definition of elementary school as Kindergarten through Grade 8 and secondary school as Grade 9 through 12. The

cohorts will likely remain together throughout the school year, but may be changed if necessary and only with substantial notice after a school break.

The following physical distancing and physical contact guidelines for in-cohort and outside of cohort behaviours apply to both students and staff:

- Within a cohort, minimizing physical contact is advised, but physical distancing need not be maintained at all times
- Outside of a cohort when outside, physical distancing is not required in elementary schools. Students can socialize with peers in different cohorts if they can minimize physical contact

Our cohorts are as follows:

- In Kindergarten, all Plum Cottage and Red Rose children and teachers form one cohort.

We have approached planning with the utmost care and attention to current health and safety guidelines.

Emergency Closures Parents can find information three ways if the school is closed:

1. Listen to the **radio**, CBC AM 690, News AM 1130
2. A message via email from *communications@vws.ca*
3. If possible, a message indicating school closure will be placed **on the school answering machine and website.**