

The Riverside Preschool Family Handbook



2025-2026

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INTRODUCTION

The Riverside School Family Handbook sets forth general expectations regarding the students' and families' enrollment at school, but does not constitute a contract between them and the school. This copy of our handbook supersedes prior versions. Riverside reserves the right to make changes at any time.

MISSION

The mission of The Riverside School is to develop active learners, patient leaders, and engaged citizens in a supportive community.

PHILOSOPHY

The Riverside School is dedicated to the ideal that children be involved, enthusiastic participants in their education. We nurture and encourage curiosity, creativity, and individuality, and we instill in students an appreciation for hard work. We believe that children can learn to be strong, effective leaders, and we are committed to developing in our students the skills necessary to take on leadership roles. We believe that students must be aware of and be active in the broader world around them in order to become ethical and compassionate members of society. Support for our students' growth as learners, leaders, and citizens must come from every element of the Riverside community, both in and out of the classroom; therefore, we value and rely on the deep involvement of parents, faculty, staff, and administration in the development of our students.

In the preschool program specifically, we believe each child has cognitive, physical, emotional and social needs that are unique and should be nurtured accordingly. Children need their basic needs to be met in a safe and nurturing space.

Children learn through play and experience, and so playful learning opportunities are thoughtfully provided to challenge and encourage their growth. We consistently provide opportunities for preschoolers to interact with and learn from the natural environment around them. Children learn what they live and see around them, and so they need families and teachers who consistently demonstrate positive, patient, and supportive behaviors around them. Working with each child's family is a key ingredient to that child's success.

The environment largely influences a child's ability to learn, grow, and develop relationships. Our classroom is set up both indoors and outdoors to provide children with the opportunity to create, explore, and learn about the world around them. The environment is influenced by the Reggio Emilia approach and is designed to act as a third teacher. The space is valued by the child, teachers, and families. This extends to the outdoor environment as well as the indoor. The layouts of these spaces are carefully arranged to provide an abundance of opportunity for communication and relationships. As well as, space to be alone to develop self awareness. The classroom artistically displays the imagination and creativity of each child. Art work is respectfully exhibited throughout the preschool & daycare. We bring this learning, these materials, and philosophies into our outdoor space as well, which we

consider an extension of the classroom and supports the place-based and nature-based learning that weaves its way through our teaching philosophy.

The Reggio Emilia approach connects the child's learning to life outside our classroom. The community and outside world is studied in detail giving the children insight into their world and how it works. Through this process children gain understanding and appreciation for the individuals in their community.

Reggio environmental highlights:

- Warm and calming colors
- Glass materials at child's level (vases, clay pots, jars for art storage)
- Plants & Flowers
- Photos of Children
- Connecting with nature & the community outside the classroom

Children are asked to be involved in the classroom community. For the children to respect the environment they must feel they are an important piece of it. We encourage the children to help us organize the classroom, suggest new materials for display, help collect natural materials, and ask their permission to display their artwork. We also expect children to clean up after themselves and participate in the daily schedule.

ACTIVE LEARNING AND CURRICULAR FOUNDATION

We believe that a challenging, inspiring and diverse early education leads to future academic achievement and positive adulthood. The Riverside School curriculum strives to integrate: sciences, mathematics, literature, social studies, modern and classical languages, arts, athletics, and wellness. Teachers model scholarship in their fields and a passion for lifelong learning. Students exercise curiosity, critical thinking, creativity, organization, and personal responsibility to take their learning several steps beyond minimal exposure. Through this effort we help students to find delight in the blend of art, academic, physical, emotional, and social development.

Our preschool curriculum is aligned with the Vermont Early Learning Standards, Teaching Strategies Gold Vermont State Assessment System and we are a Reggio Emilia inspired classroom. We will also be providing the handwriting / letter curriculum called "Handwriting Without Tears", "Literacy Beginning", and "Eureka Math". We will provide hands-on science weekly, and provide creative exploration at all times.

It is the responsibility of the preschool director to develop age appropriate curriculum for the classroom. The assistant will help her in the planning, developing, and administering of this curriculum. Everything will be approved by the preschool director and/or the head of school.

MOTTO

Cum patientia omnia possunt confici. With patience all things are possible.

EMBLEM

The Riverside School's emblem is the heron, a symbol of patience, perseverance, and tenacity. A great blue heron frequented the campus in the school's first years.

HISTORY

Riverside's preschool program began in the fall of 2016, adding yet another educational experience to the dynamic program that had been offered here to elementary and middle school students since 1981.

Riverside was the home of Dudley P. Hall, who built Riverside in 1864. He made his fortune as a lumber baron in Burke before starting a mill in Lyndonville. His portrait hangs in the office of the head of the school. The Riverside house stayed in the Hall family for many generations. Hall's daughter, Mabel, married Charles Walter, and the house was passed on to their daughter, Dorothy Charlotte Walter, who made many changes, including restoring the furnace, digging a well, and rebuilding the foundation. When Dorothy died the house passed to her sister, Elizabeth. Elizabeth left Riverside to her daughter, Annette, whose child, Annie, also spent much time there.

Riverside Cottage, as it was then called, was the site of many social events, including weddings, Halloween parties, birthdays, and church socials. Many of these events were held in the Cedar Circle while the children played in the cupola. These social customs were passed down through the family members that lived at Riverside.

Dr. Timothy Thompson bought the house in 1976 when the original family could no longer afford its upkeep. He made more renovations to the house, adding a laundry room and closing up the four-seat outhouse (currently the paint closet). The Thompsons also started a school in their house because they wanted their elementary-age children to be challenged more. They wanted their children to learn French and to explore hands-on learning in a small community. When the Wildridge School in Newark closed, the Newells and the Kohnes were open to new teaching opportunities and joined the Thompsons at what was then called the Riverside Day School. In addition to practicing medicine, Dr. Thompson worked part-time as a teacher. When the school started, there were eight students and used rooms one, two, and three, while the Thompson family lived in the rest of the house.

There have been a great many overnight field trips in the history of The Riverside School. There was usually one in the spring and one in the fall. Everyone, student and teacher alike, was expected to help out on these field trips. For instance, they would wash the dishes, clean the fire pits, and at the end of the field trips the kids would take down the tents. When they went on field trips all the students would get an assignment packet that would have to be finished by the end of the trip. Today, Riverside continues to take two all-school field trips each year.

The early days of Riverside saw the birth of many traditions that continue today. Students also could win an award that's called the Kohne cup, which was won by getting the most eggs on the Easter Egg Hunt. They had Kite Day when they made their own kites and flew

them. When Riverside was a young school, the Thompson's cat would knock over the students' lunch bags and the dogs would eat it. The students started bringing in lunch boxes that closed. They used to have art in the cupola because it was a great view. Riverside has always performed plays. Every year the kids would have Mr. Newell dress up in a huge pumpkin costume and he would go around checking on classes on Halloween. Many of these traditions have changed over the years, but many live on. We continue to hold Mythology Day in celebration of our emphasis on classics. We put on an all-school musical theater production every spring. And every fall, Riverside students participate in Global Fair to honor the long-running Riverside emphasis on geography.

(Written and Revised by the Class of 2009, in the fall of 2005 and the spring of 2009)

ACCREDITATION

The Riverside School is approved for public funding by the Vermont Agency of Education and accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Our preschool program is licensed and regulated by the Vermont Department for Children and Families.

THE ORDER OF THE HERON

The Order of the Heron was founded by Riverside's Board of Trustees to honor outstanding, long-term devotion to and care for the school. Merle Thompson, Founder and Trustee Emerita, was the first inductee, which took place at Riverside's 2004 Commencement.

ADMINISTRATION, LEADERSHIP, FACULTY, AND GOVERNANCE

Head of School

Caroline Thompson

Assistant Head of School

Nelia Rath

- support for the head of school
- direction of co-curricular programs
- published communications

Director of Finance and Operations

Krystal Ingalls

- front office communications
- financial record keeping
- general student care

Preschool Directors & Teachers

McKenna Earl

Assistant Teachers

Katie Baker

Kristen Langlais

Marie Vaine

On Site Substitute Staff

Sean Fortier

Krystal Ingalls

Nelia Rath

Jamie Robinson

Emily Spring

Marie Vaine

The Riverside School Inc. is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation governed by a Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees is responsible for the overall policy of the School and the School's financial stability. The Board of Trustees hires, directs, advises, and evaluates the Head of School, its only employee. It formulates its strategic plan, which the Head implements for the improvement of the school.

The head of school is directly responsible to the Board and acts in consultation with the Board. The Board entrusts the Head of School or their designee with the day-to-day operation of the School; the supervision of students; the hiring, supervision, evaluation, and development of staff; and the integrity and development of the curriculum.

Board of Trustees

Kim Behr

Eric Daffinrud

Barry Hertz

Bryn Hoffman

Cath Kane '85

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Nicki Reimert

Arcelie Reyes

Carrie Stahler

Karina Weiss

Polly Yerkes, '86

Merle Thompson, Emerita

ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT

WELCOME!

You are here because as parents you have a willingness to be involved in the Riverside community, striving to make our program a real part of your family's time, energy, and resources. Your preschool child demonstrates your encouragement of learning at home; is naturally engaged with a curiosity for learning; persists through tasks or challenges; and cooperates with peers and teachers. We look forward to celebrating and pursuing those things further with your family.

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

Riverside preschool students must be three years old by September 1. Students of The Riverside Preschool are a community of curious and motivated learners. In order to create this community we seek families who bring:

- parent(s) and caregivers who have a willingness to be involved in the Riverside community, striving to make our program a real part of your family's time, energy, resources
- a child who is naturally engaged and demonstrates curiosity for learning
- a child who persists through tasks or challenges
- a child who cooperates with peers and teachers
- A child who demonstrates evidence of an encouragement of learning at home

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES

The preschool admissions committee is made up of the head of school, the preschool director, the director of operations, the elementary team leader, and the kindergarten teacher.

Riverside maintains a list of all inquiring families. In October we reach out to all of them to find out if they are still interested and their preferred schedule (part time or full time), to explain our admissions procedures, and to provide them with an application and more detailed information about our program. Applications are due in January, and visiting times are scheduled for each applicant in February.

During hour-long visits the preschool director can observe the applicant in the classroom setting (social interactions, independence from parents, speech, following directions, behavior, gross and fine motor skills) and converse with parents. Soon after, parents of applicants meet with the head of school as well. Notes from both experiences are included in the applicant's file.

After all applicant visits are complete, the admissions committee considers the complete set of qualified applicants and makes decisions with consideration for:

- spaces available in the class
- prior history with the Riverside community
- evidence of the admission criteria from the visiting day and parent conversations

- no more than three total part-time students

The committee also creates a wait-list of remaining applicants; if they do not enroll, their names are automatically added to the following year's inquiry list. Parents are notified of decisions by the middle of March. Enrollment contracts are returned to the director of operations by April 1. Later in the spring or early summer, the preschool director works with the parent advisory group classroom head to welcome new families personally.

GENERAL OPERATIONAL INFORMATION

ATTENDANCE

The Riverside School believes that regular attendance is directly related to success in academic work and establishes habits and skills necessary for learning to occur. We place value on the learning that takes place in our classrooms each and every day. Lost instruction is difficult to recover, but lost engagement in discussion, debate, data collection, group work, and peer interaction is nearly impossible to replicate. Riverside is required to report your child's attendance to your supervisory union as part of accessing Act 166/Universal Preschool funds. If your child is absent from preschool for:

- an average of one preschool day per week over the course of two months or
- more than 2 consecutive weeks or
- the equivalent of 3 weeks

You may be at risk of losing your Universal PreK funding.

SCHEDULE

Riverside's Preschool will be in operation from 7:45 am to 3:00pm Monday through Friday. See the director of finance and operations or the preschool director for a yearly calendar, which is aligned with Riverside's K-8 program, including weather cancellations and half days.

Arrival

The parents of our Pre-K students are asked to park in the designated parking spaces near the Yurt and walk their children to and from the Pre-K classroom. Students are invited to arrive at school between 7:45 and 8:45, during which time free play is encouraged and facilitated in the classroom or outdoors by two staff members. Children must be escorted into the building by an adult. Please make sure our staff are aware of their arrival, and complete the sign in sheet with the exact time. Do not leave your child unattended outside of the preschool classroom. When accompanied by siblings or friends, it is the parent's responsibility to keep those children with them at all times. It is not our staff's responsibility to care for children not enrolled in the center. Assist your child in storing their personal belongings in their assigned cubby and putting their lunch into a refrigerator, helping them to take ownership of their things. Before departing yourself, please ensure that your child has washed their hands appropriately with soap and water.

Daily Routine

7:45-8:45 Arrival and Free Play

9:00-9:30 Snack

9:30-10:00 Morning Meeting

10:00-10:30 Math and Literacy Stations / Group Project

10:15-10:45 Outside Play / Nature Walk

11:00-11:30 Specials* (M: Art, Tu: PE, Wed: PE, Thu: Music, Fri: Music)

11:30-11:45 Meeting Time

11:45-12:15 Lunch

12:30-12:45 Doodles/ Read Aloud / Mindfulness / Yoga

12:45-1:45 Nap / Rest (if student sleeps, they will be monitored and gently woken up at 2:45)

1:45-2:15 Adventure Walk and Journals

2:15-2:45 Free Play (inside or outside)/Reflection Meeting

2:45 Dismissal

3:00-4:15 After School Program (free play inside or outside)

All enrolled preschoolers will be a part of the daily schedule and routine. Each student will be assigned a daily job and follow the daily picture schedule.

There will be no dedicated religious activity in the preschool program. Teachers will educate students about holidays celebrated by cultures around the world, such as Passover, Christmas, or Eid.

Dismissal

Our full day preschool day ends at 3:00. The half day students are dismissed at 12:30.

There is an option to enroll in an afterschool program, more information about that is below. When picking up your child please complete the sign out sheet with the exact time and your initials.

Only those persons listed in the Permissions section of the Preschool Enrollment Packet will be allowed to pick up your child from the program. Please arrange a time for the staff to meet them so we will be able to recognize them. If, in the event of an emergency, someone else is coming to pick up the child, we must have your authorization and a description of that person in order for us to properly identify them. For the safety of your children, we may ask for identification from that person. In addition, we are required by the VT Child Care Licensing Regulations to have a system in place which will verify that we are actually speaking with the parent on the phone. At Riverside where we enjoy a small community and strong individual relationships, we fully expect to recognize your voice and tone on the phone. However we will also employ an extra safety system where the parent must provide a pass number (given to them by the director) which can easily verify that it is the parent we are speaking with. This number is printed by the child's name on our Emergency Clipboard by the phone. Parents who are separated or divorced and have certain stipulations (joint custody, sole custody, visitation, etc.) must have on record any papers filed with the court pertaining to parental rights. This system will enable us to respect the legal rights of parents and provide security for the child.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

We will also be offering after-school care from 3:00-4:15 for \$5.00 a day. On days when school is dismissed early at 12:30, we will provide aftercare from then until 4:15. The after care program is subject to meeting smaller student:teacher ratios, and so there may not always be space for your family. The preschool staff will make every effort to communicate to and support all families with their needs. Please schedule your child's weekly attendance of this extra care on the prior Friday, so we can plan for appropriate staffing.

FOOD

Each student should bring a personal water bottle with their name on it, along with a morning snack, healthy lunch, and afternoon snack in labeled containers each day. Our refrigerator and microwaves are available for use. Lunches and snacks should not include candy, chewing gum, soda, or caffeinated beverages. The school asks parents to support these guidelines when students are eating at school or on field trips. On Wednesdays, students may order pizza by the slice, which is then charged to the family's school store account.

Suggestions for snack and lunch include:

- Water (Please provide a water bottle)
- Fluid Milk ~ includes whole milk, low fat milk, or flavored milk
- Breads and Cereals ~ include whole-grain enriched breads, cooked grains, pasta, cereal, and crackers. Limited Sweets/ cereal bars.
- Meats & Meat Alternatives~ includes meat, poultry, fish, cheese, eggs, peanut butter, yogurt or dried beans and peas meet this requirement. (Please provide eating utensils if needed)
- Fruits and Veggies ~ include fresh, frozen, canned and dried fruit and veggies, and/or 100% fruit juice.
- Healthy recipes will be provided throughout the year and the class will work to make a class cookbook to go home at the end of the semester.

Why is Mealtime so Important?

Children in group settings learn so much at mealtimes. They learn to be social, caring, and self-directed diners in group settings. They engage in stimulating, informative and creative conversations. Children learn about nutrition and try unfamiliar foods or show interest in trying new items because they see their peers eating things that are new to them.

Mealtimes in child care settings offer such grand opportunities for establishing routines and patiently helping children build skills for healthy lifelong eating. Lunch time will be a relaxed social time for the children. We do not allow children to share food at this time and only eat what they bring each day.

Sharing

We are always open to friends bringing snacks to share for the class to try. Please let the teachers know if you are interested in doing so. Should parents volunteer to prepare foods for an event at school, we ask that they consider dietary restrictions of the students involved by asking for guidance from a teacher or the health care staff. If they are preparing a dish for an event that includes adults, simply note ingredients on a card that can be displayed with the food. We ask that students not share candy at school out of respect for other families' habits and expectations. The exception to this is in celebration of certain holidays, which will be forewarned in the Monday Memo.

Special Dietary Needs

Special dietary needs must be brought to the attention of the director upon admission. Any food allergies and dietary needs must be put in writing by the parent in the Medical Information section of the Preschool Enrollment Packet and communicated verbally to the

staff as well. The center will keep a list posted to remind staff of allergies. This year we are a peanut-free classroom.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

The following items should accompany your child each day:

- A complete change of clothes (shirt, pants, underwear, socks). Be sure to check their cubby frequently to ensure there are adequate extras.
- Outdoor clothing appropriate for the weather for all parts of the body; a gear list will be provided before season changes throughout the year.
- Small thin rest time blanket and small pillow OR a nap roll, which will be kept at the center during the week and then sent home weekly for laundering.(Sheets will be provided.)
- Snacks and lunch

All clothing must be labeled with initials or with the child's name. Clothing should be washable as all the children will be encouraged to participate in messy activities such as painting, cooking and sand/water play. Sneakers and rubber-soled shoes are preferred for safety and comfort reasons. Slippers are acceptable, indoors only, as long as they are safe.

Security Items

To help the child adjust to the environment at the center, security items can be used (for example: stuffed animals, pictures, etc.) These are times when all young children need to feel or touch a link from home and these needs will be met by the staff in a reassuring manner. Once the child is comfortable these items can be kept within the cubby.

Toys

Toys that mimic guns and war or lead to rough play are forbidden at Riverside's preschool without exception. We request that toys not be brought from home. The center has plenty of toys that have been purchased to share for their durability and educational purposes.

Our preschool director believes that gun play when focused on target practice and "hunting" is a natural inclination for many young children, and that using the child's curiosity can be an opportunity for teaching gun safety and preventing guns from entering dramatic play. When the teachers observe a child turning a stick or other item into a gun, they will initiate rules (no pointing it at other humans or living creatures) and then begin a discussion about the real use of guns. After the group understands the seriousness of guns, teachers will set up a target and safety line in a space away from large groups. The safety line serves as the place where students can stand to aim their stick at the target (usually a cardboard square with a circle drawn on it). Students must announce, "clear the area" and wait for anyone in front of the safety line to move behind the safety line. They can then throw their stick at the target or simply pretend to shoot. This procedure provides students time to think through their actions, pay attention to their surroundings, and practice impulse control as they follow multi-step directions. This policy would shift if there were students with trauma backgrounds associated with guns.

SAFE SLEEP

Children are much happier and learn effortlessly when they have enough rest. Each child is given a nonporous cot with a tight fitting sheet. Parents are required to provide a thin blanket and small pillow (if desired) for their child's comfort during rest time. Parents are required to wash the bedding weekly. The cots are labeled and only used by one child for the year. These cots are cleaned weekly. The cots and bedding are stored individually preventing contact and return home at the end of the week to be laundered. All children are required to go potty prior to rest time. (In the event of an accident, children will be changed promptly and bedding will be sent home in a plastic bag. Cots will be disinfected.) Children are not required to sleep. Those that do not nap are provided with books and quiet items on their cots, allowing other children an opportunity to fall asleep.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Throughout the school year the Riverside community engages in seasonal celebrations and festivals to highlight curricular areas, such as Biography Fair, Community Service Day, Winter Carnival, Mythology Day, Play Day/Week, or the Festival of Poetry and Prose. Often the last day of school before a vacation is dedicated to such a special event before an early dismissal. As a preschool, we slowly introduce these whole-school activities to our youngest students as the year progresses and the preschool students become comfortable with our routines, expectations, and Riverside's campus. We encourage family and friends to join us during these celebrations. All of these events are described in the Monday Memo and listed on our calendar and our website.

FIELD TRIPS

We hope that when completing the Preschool Enrollment Packet, parents/guardians give permission for their child to leave the preschool premises, under the supervision of the preschool staff, for "field trips" on Riverside's greater campus. The destination may be to the upstairs of the barn, our fields or those of the neighboring properties, the cedar circle, the library, the kitchen, or the Cobleigh Library Book Mobile. If that permission is not given, then preschool staff will communicate directly with the family to resolve those concerns.

Adventure Walks

Throughout the year we walk to the neighboring property that is generously shared with us and includes our "Birch Grove", "Frog Pond," and "Green Valley" that students have so named through their time observing, creating, and getting to know the space. We find deep value in these excursions as they engage all the large muscle groups, support endurance and stamina, and allow students to learn about plants and animals in their local environment. We extend our trips from the playground throughout the first semester to help students feel comfortable and safe with long walks. Teachers are trained in risk management and will stay close to campus until group gathering responsiveness is gauged. Please see Risk Benefit Assessment cards hanging in the classroom to understand risk management, which pertains to whittling and fire use as well (see also New Permission Forms).

Toileting will happen at a designated pee tree if we are far away from the classroom or in a Lugaloo that is cleaned and sanitized daily. Hand sanitizer will be provided for students. We will walk back to school for bowel movements.

Off Campus Field-Trips

The preschool director is responsible for arranging field trips off of Riverside's campus for the preschool students, and will inform the head of school and director of finance and operation of the plans in writing. Parents/guardians will be notified of off campus field trips two weeks in advance and asked to sign a specific permission slip. Parent volunteers are encouraged to join us on field trips, if they have completed criminal background checks and demonstrate understanding of our field trip policy. Smoking is not allowed in the presence of children during field trips.

Parents should provide snacks and/or lunch appropriate to the schedule and field trip activities for that day, any necessary money, and appropriate clothing and footwear. Preschool students will be supervised in small groups with a specific teacher on age-appropriate field trips. Staff will carry first aid kits, extra water, and extra snacks.

Vehicle Safety Guidelines

Any person or vehicle used to transport children for a field trip must abide by the following rules set forth by the VT Child Care Licensing Regulations.

- Any vehicle used to transport children must be insured, registered, inspected, and safe and in good repair. A written statement shall be obtained stating such from the owner of the vehicle and kept for one year.
- Each car must be equipped with a First Aid Kit and the interior temperature must be comfortably maintained.
- All children must be in appropriate car seats and never be left unattended.
- Written permission shall be obtained prior to transportation. This slip will be retained in the child's file.
- A written record shall be kept of all field trips including: Date, Time, Drivers, Vehicles, Children that were transported, and Confirmation of each child's return. This information shall be kept on the Field Trip Record Sheet and kept for one year.

Ski Program

Riverside preschool students are invited to participate in ski lessons at Burke Mountain twice each winter. The preschool program will dismiss at 12:30 on those dates. In order for students to participate, parents must complete the necessary forms and be able to transport and attend the lessons with their children. Snowboard lessons are not part of this opportunity. We cannot provide after school care on these days.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

When a member of Riverside's professional teaching staff is absent, every effort is made to obtain a skilled, experienced person with the necessary certifications and a commitment to working collaboratively with students in their learning to substitute. The preschool director

develops and maintains a list of qualified substitute teachers. Before being asked to substitute at Riverside, an individual visits the school, is interviewed by the preschool director. Parents are always welcome to volunteer or contract as substitutes. Please contact the preschool director or the director of finance and operations to sign a release for the necessary background checks, and to make an appointment for fingerprinting.

CLOSURE

Staff Development

As is required of our 5-star program, Riverside's preschool teachers will have five staff development days that may not be listed in The Riverside School yearly calendar. The preschool director will seek to find substitute staff so that the program can run consistently. If they are unable, they will announce these dates through a parent email, newsletter and weeks in advance so families can plan appropriately for the cancellation of that date.

Snow Days

Occasionally severe weather may require cancellation or delayed opening of school. The head of school will make a final decision as early as possible. As soon as conditions are assessed and a decision is reached, local radio stations and television stations will be informed. The director of finance and operations will start an automated school calling system and will notify news outlets. When in doubt, call the head of school. These days are still considered tuition paid days and there will not be a deduction for cancellations.

Other Emergency

If there is a need to conduct a closing due to a condition that would affect the health or safety of the children and staff you will be notified by phone. Parents will be called and an announcement will be made on the local radio station. Such instances might include power outage (requirement of licensure), flooding, or early dismissal due to weather conditions.

For Extended Learning at Home

Decisions about whole campus closure and reopening will be made by the head of school, in consultation with the board of trustees and the leadership team, of which the preschool director is a part. Such decisions will always comply fully with state and federal guidelines, which may be stricter than Riverside's normal operating procedures. Should Riverside be required to close its campus and continue with home-based learning, we will announce that with sufficient time for families to prepare and for students to gather materials and information from campus.

Preschool teachers will strive to design learning goals and activities that foster our mission, are developmentally appropriate, and also recognize the unique opportunities and limitations of learning from home. We hope families will do their best to engage with materials and activities planned by teachers. We hope parents will do their best to provide space, materials, and a routine for their students at home that supports both their academic learning and their mental health. Consistent, honest, and clear communication between students, parents, and teachers is essential during these times.

Should a campus closure last for longer than three weeks, faculty will adjust their formal assessments and student records to reflect and accommodate that unique, extended change in educational format.

PARENTS' ROLE IN EDUCATION

Involvement

Choosing to become a Riverside family means making it a priority to take an active role in the life of our school. Our work as a faculty and staff would not be possible without your generous support and we hope you feel a shared commitment to our mission. School life extends and develops the process of learning with the family. Riverside depends on parent involvement and support. Staying informed through our Monday Memo and emails from specific teachers or staff, and initiating communication with teachers and staff is essential. Parents are encouraged and welcome to observe, participate in, or help with classroom activities at any time.

We respect all race, nationalities, and cultures. It is important for any child's healthy development that all those who care for him/her work together. When we as professionals support parents, parents are better able to nurture and support their child. Parents have freedom of access to the facility, their child, their child's records, and the staff at all times. They have access to their child at any time without prior notice.

The success of The Riverside School depends greatly on the commitment of parents to make our program a real part of your family's time, energy, and resources. Their active support enhances our programs and represents a unique opportunity for involvement in each child's education. Parents participate in a variety of ways, meeting many of our needs. Volunteer opportunities include minor cleaning and maintenance work around campus, transporting and chaperoning students during sports and field trip activities, providing food for special events, serving with trustees and teachers on strategic committees, assisting in classrooms, answering phones and working on fundraising events. We enthusiastically welcome opportunities for parents to share their skills/talents/ and hobbies with our students as well.

Recognizing that income from tuition only covers a portion of Riverside's operating budget, we ask families to recognize that in choosing an independent school they have also chosen to support our advancement efforts which include: marketing our school through positive reputation, fundraising events, and annual giving. More details about advancement are in the "Financial Information" section beginning on page 33.

ANNUAL FORMS

At the start of each school year we ask parents to complete a set of annual forms. While this may be cumbersome, it is essential for us to be sure we have accurate information about our students and families, and is expected of approved and accredited schools like ours. Students whose Permission and Medical Release form are not complete will not be able to attend the Fall Field Trip at the start of the year. The set of annual forms includes:

- Preschool Enrollment Packet
- Act 166/Universal PreK Tuition forms
- Updated Immunization Records
- Afterschool Registration (optional)
- Criminal Background Check

- Driver Info Release
- Planned Absences (as needed)

PARENT ADVISORY GROUP

The purpose of the Parent Advisory Group is to create a group of Riverside parents to support the Riverside teachers, administrators, and program. All parents are invited to attend the regular meetings. While attendance is not mandatory, regular attendance helps create a more effective group. The specific goals of the PAG and its dedicated members are to:

1. Support two-way communications between the head of school, faculty, and parents.
 - Actively read the Monday Memo each week, responding with questions as needed to be confident in its meaning
 - Use social media to stay abreast of and share goings-on at Riverside
 - Be present and welcoming of others at Riverside events
 - Attend PAG meetings to discuss ideas, information, celebrations, concerns, or needs that Riverside has. This helps us keep up to date and able to share this information as needed with all the other parents.
 - Share questions or concerns we have and to bring awareness to administrators, facilitating brainstorming about solutions. (To clarify, personal issues and issues of a particular student or family are not part of our role, instead these issues are to be sent directly to the teacher or to the head of school)
 - Work together to create solutions to any issues that arise and to help provide volunteers and support to complete any needed projects.
2. Act as a mentor for other Riverside parents to learn about and participate in the Riverside culture, and the culture of independent schools in general.
 - Classroom parent leaders are expected to specifically mentor new Riverside families, which requires making a habit of checking in with those parents periodically during the school year, both in-person and by phone or email.
 - Recognize and participate in the ways that our school may be different than others you've experienced: participate in additional fundraising events, donate to Annual Appeal, stay abreast of legislative issues, act as a volunteer, attend events, build relationships with other families and students
3. Facilitate parent participation in Riverside events, which includes fundraisers, coffee house events, festival days, presentations of learning, and more. Members are to be aware of these events, attend whenever possible, and share with other parents as needed.

Specific Membership Responsibilities of the PAG

- Riverside Administrators: attend PAG meetings to share information and concerns, answer questions, clarify issues as needed; help to plan the meeting agendas; support PAG Leaders as needed; provide volunteer students for child care during meetings.

- PAG Leaders: Attend meetings; provide support as listed above; create and facilitate the meeting agenda; support members to be heard; be a point person for room parents to answer questions or clarify issues as needed; continually assess the PAG's role and purpose; create organizational chart for the PAG, continue to assess and update it as needed.
- PAG Members/Room Parents: attend meetings; provide support as listed above; possibly sign up to share in contributing food for meetings; communicate to parents in the classroom they are assigned to share PAG information; make a connection with classroom teacher to facilitate ongoing communication; build relationships with all parents from class for communicating PAG information and supporting that class's teacher.
- Fundraiser Point Person: Riverside builds its budget with an expectation that the parent community will collaborate to meet a specific fundraising goal that addresses the gap between tuition income and program expenses. This person will attend PAG meetings; provide support as listed above; and also be available to receive fundraising ideas from parents and then decide, delegate, and help to execute them with other parents. While we have some traditional fundraisers, we want to welcome new ideas annually.
- Sunshine Point Person: attend meetings; provide support as listed above; be available to receive any specific concerns or celebrations from the personal lives of our faculty, staff, and families in order to coordinate supports, gifts, or the like, as needed; coordinate volunteers for our traditional, semi-annual, teacher appreciation meal weeks.

FAMILY CONTACT LIST

In the early fall, once all annual forms have been returned, we will share a list of grade levels and contact information for all of our students and families. We encourage families to use that information to support each other and build a stronger Riverside community. Families might use that information to discover new neighbors, coordinate carpooling, plan social events, reach out to another family in need or celebration, or communicate with peer parents. Parents can request that we not share any or part of their contact information on the annual Family Biography form.

PARENTAL COMPORTMENT

Riverside expects all parents and guardians to comply with applicable school policies and state and federal laws. We reserve the right to regulate the behavior of adults in our community and on our campus. We may authorize dismissal of the adult from campus if it is in the best interest of the school.

BIRTHDAYS

Staff, teacher, and student birthdays are noted for all to see on the main calendar in the front office. Celebrating birthdays by singing "Happy Birthday" at morning assembly is a Riverside tradition. On a student's birthday, parents may provide cake, other treats, and drinks (no candy or chewing gum, soda or caffeinated beverages) for your student's class OR the entire student body at lunchtime. Please consider students with known food allergies in your

planning; any questions about those needs may be directed to the teacher or our health care staff person. We celebrate summer birthdays on the last day of school.

DISTRIBUTION OF INVITATIONS

Distributing invitations in any manner at school for a social event outside of school, such as a birthday party, is not allowed unless everyone in the class is included in the event. Please instruct your child to consider the feelings of others and to not to discuss any such events at school.

ORIENTATION, COMMUNICATION, AND ASSESSMENT

ORIENTATION

For those enrolled, in August of each year there will be a Back to School Open House and ice cream social, which allows parents and students to visit the classroom prior to the beginning of the first day and the new school year. This community event enables children to meet new friends and helps create a smooth transition for all.

Special belongings also can help children with the transition into our preschool routine. A special blanket for quiet time, a favorite stuffed animal or treasured pictures of loved ones may help them feel more comfortable at school. Such items may be brought each day. Once the children are comfortable we encourage them to keep special treasures in their cubbies.

Parents are allowed to visit their child's classroom at any time and are encouraged to volunteer. Please see the teachers for volunteer ideas if you are interested and please keep in mind the classroom routines upon visitations.

COMMUNICATION

We welcome your thoughts and questions regarding our preschool program. Please communicate directly with our staff to share such things. The door to the director's office is located in the foyer as you enter our classroom space, and it's "always open." To have a successful program it is essential to have good communication between all parties involved. Daily discussions with you will be the most important communication. Parents will be greeted upon arrival and pick up. You may have the opportunity to converse with the teachers each day. If lengthy conversations are needed, please make an appointment to conference with the preschool director. We will always make ourselves available for these personal conferences. The following tools will be utilized for communication:

- Back to School Open House
- Riverside Preschool Family Handbook
- The bulletin board in the foyer
- Daily notes and greetings
- Monday Memo
- Two conferences during the year

Monday Memo

Riverside provides timely and pertinent information about current events in the school community through the yearly calendar and weekly Monday Memo. The Monday Memo includes a synopsis of each class's lessons for the upcoming week, a calendar of important dates in the month ahead, and notices about needs, events, and information from the School. Whether your family receives the memo electronically or in hard copy, it is imperative that it is read thoroughly and in a timely manner. It is emailed directly to middle school students, posted on our website, and hung on the bulletin boards by the entrance to the main house and in the microwave room as well. Many students are eager to read the

memo in order to understand and to plan for all the goings on at their school. Questions and suggestions are always welcome. Additions to the Monday Memo must reach the assistant head of school by Friday of the week prior to the Memo's publication.

Daily Updates

The preschool director may choose to use a digital app like Birghtwheel or Storypark to provide daily updates and photos. Please look for specific communication from them about accessing such platforms.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent conferences will be held twice a year to permit you to talk to us about the program and your child's experience in it. At this time we will also be sharing developmental records with you. These records and checklists enable us and you to see the level of development your child is at and what skills they are acquiring. We use these checklists to plan appropriate activities for individuals and small groups.

STUDENT AND STAFF FILES

In order to comply with state childcare regulations, we must have complete and accurate information provided by a parent/guardian in the Preschool Enrollment Packet and other annual forms (see page 18). These records, along with staff files, will be kept in both the office of the preschool director and Riverside's main offices. It is imperative that these files be kept up to date with the following information:

- date of initial enrollment;
- the days and hours the child is regularly scheduled to attend;
- child's name, current home address and current home telephone number;
- child's date of birth;
- name, address, and all applicable current telephone numbers for parents/guardians;
- name, address and all applicable current telephone numbers for at least two other people designated by the parents as emergency contacts;
- names for all persons authorized to pick the child up
- record of an annual physical and health history that includes the name and telephone number of the child's primary health care and dental care providers
- description of any special medical, developmental, emotional or educational needs of the child including allergies, existing illnesses or injuries, previous serious illnesses or injuries and any prescribed medication including those for emergency situations;
- written authorization from the parent for Riverside to be able to obtain emergency medical care and transportation;
- child's immunization record or approved exemption document;
- if applicable, a copy of court orders on custody and visitation arrangements
- if applicable, any obvious injuries discovered and documented on daily health check

In accordance with the VT Child Care Licensing Regulations, all documentation related to a specific child will be saved for 365 days after a child's last day of enrollment and attendance. Should a parent request any part of those records, they will be made available within five business days.

PRIVACY OF INFORMATION

Riverside does not sell or give any information, such as postal, electronic mail, and/or residence addresses or telephone numbers to anyone outside the parent community. The school does not disclose recipients when emailing Monday Memos or other communications. Official school business, school-related fundraising, regular school communications, school-related volunteer opportunities, holiday greetings, social events, and mission-aligned community or educational events are the only allowed uses of the list.

Regarding individual student experiences and written records, we use our discretion to share information only on a need-to-know basis, when it is in the best interest of the student or our community. We may also share specific information when legal requirements demand our disclosure.

Formal student records are released only after parents have authorized a specific request.

ASSESSMENT

The preschool director is responsible for designing their assessments of their students. Assessments serve as a mechanism that allows a teacher to communicate progress to the student, their parents, and future teachers. The Riverside School believes that the primary goal of assessment is to improve student learning. Further, we believe that assessments are varied in form, designed to guide instruction and to inform instructional decisions that are best for the learner. Assessment should focus on all areas of student learning.

Teaching Strategies Gold is the comprehensive research based assessment program for ages birth through kindergarten. Riverside's preschool staff use it to measure a child's abilities in social emotional skills, physical skills, language skills, cognitive skills, literacy skills, and mathematical skills. These records are printed and used as a progress report to be shared with parents and will be stored in their personal file. The Director is responsible for such reports but it is a group process to record data during a normal day's activities to be used for such reports. The skill assessment tools are designed to give parents an understanding of the child's capabilities within a comprehensive range.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

Riverside teachers strive to include all enrolled students as equal participants and community members in the classroom. The environment, program, and daily schedule will always be planned and implemented to support all the unique students. Teachers and support staff meet regularly to discuss an individual child's progress and needs for support. At times Riverside's other administrators may be involved in such conversations.

ADVANCEMENT TO KINDERGARTEN

To assess preparedness for kindergarten we will use Teaching Strategies Gold as required by our state funding, which is explained in more detail on page 4. Letter and number knowledge and social and emotional readiness. Those families wanting to enroll their children in Riverside's kindergarten must complete a full application process, even if they

are already enrolled in our preschool program. This process includes visiting the kindergarten classroom (more below), a parent interview, and a written application.

The rising preschooler will spend part of a day visiting the kindergarten classroom to experience its program and be observed by its teacher. They will be looking to assess the following skills and understanding:

- separates from parent easily
- knowledge of the names of at least ten letters and some letter sounds.
- writing own name independently and legibly
- rotely counts to at least ten with accuracy
- plays/works independently for at least ten minutes
- cleans up after self
- identifies rhyming words
- follows directions
- listens to a story without interrupting
- manages bathroom needs and other self-help activities such as getting dressed.
- uses scissors, glue, paint, pencils, etc. with relative ease.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION OF EXCELLENCE

The Riverside School guides its students toward several goals. Prominent among these are the development of positive self identification through support and achievement, a positive attitude toward learning, and the acquisition of basic and enduring learning skills. To achieve these goals the school provides a diversified and demanding curriculum that stimulates and challenges the student. Each student is admitted and sustained at Riverside with the understanding that he or she can know true success. The encouragement and recognition of this success is the daily work of the faculty and is also noted in semester comments and conferences. The faculty recognizes outstanding effort and achievement by students throughout the year. At commencement, the faculty gives formal recognition to students for outstanding achievement and effort.

CONVEYING AND RESOLVING ISSUES

Regarding Students and Staff

If a parent has a question or concern about his student's work in the classroom, behavior with other children, or interaction with a teacher, they should contact the teacher directly. Since we are committed to teaching our students about the importance of direct communication, we would ask that you model that by making arrangements to confer with the teacher directly either through a conference or a phone conversation.

Should a parent or student still feel a concern has not been addressed, then the parent should call and schedule a conference with the teacher and the head of school. The conference will help define the problem and will initiate a reasonable and documented process leading to the resolution of the issue in a timely manner.

If an issue involves the head of school, the parent should first discuss the issue with the head. If the issue is not resolved, the parent should convey the concern in writing to the president of

the board of trustees, who will arrange for a meeting with a parent and the head of school to resolve the issue.

Regarding School Programs and Policies

Should a parent or student have a concern about an aspect of our program or policy, either may request a conference with the head of school. The conference will help define the problem and will lead to faculty discussion and possibly modifying the area concern. In an effort to be supportive and model appropriate communication and problem solving, we ask that parents not advance their concerns regarding program or policy with other parents.

If an action by a teacher is identified by a parent as a violation of law or of school policy as defined in *The Riverside School Corporate Book*, which will be available on our website later this fall, the parent should discuss the concern immediately with the head of school, who will document the complaint and take appropriate action as defined in state and/or federal regulations, or policy implementation as defined in other Riverside Board and/or personnel policies.

Regarding State Licensure

If you are a parent that wishes to view a copy of the Vt Child Care Licensing Regulations there is a copy found in our foyer under the bulletin board. You may also view these regulations online at <http://www.state.vt.us/srs/childcare/licensing/license.htm>.

If you feel a concern related to following regulations needs further action, you are invited to call 802-241-3110. The Child Care Consumer Concern Line is 1-800-540-7942.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

GENERAL PRACTICE

Riverside's preschool teachers act as role models for positive behavior. They also set limits on behavior and help students stay within those limits. While establishing behavioral guidelines or limits we make students aware of what is expected of them. We set safe parameters in which they can make choices, and we provide acceptable outlets for negative behaviors. Security grows in an environment that has limits. No child will be expected to perform behavior that is beyond his or her comprehension or ability. Rules, expectations, and limits will be applied consistently. These limits will be made clear to children and discussed in group and individual settings in a firm, non-intimidating and sensitive manner by the staff.

The staff will work to create a physical and emotional environment that encourages children to behave in socially acceptable ways. One of the goals of our preschool program is to help children learn methods of solving problems, to the extent possible at each of their levels of development and ability. Staff will anticipate, intervene and redirect before disruptive behavior occurs. The staff will assist and support the children at all times in learning to "use their words" with the adults and children around them, to express their feelings in the situations they encounter with other people and to find ways to settle conflicts peacefully.

Our center follows the CSEFEL Model. This model is a program that helps children build relationships through supportive environments. The Center on Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) is focused on promoting the social emotional development and school readiness of young children birth to age 5. CSEFEL is a national resource center funded by the Office of Head Start and Child Care Bureau for disseminating research and evidence based practices to early childhood programs across the country. Children learn to use Solution Cards to solve conflicts, to talk out problems in the friendship corner and to build a sense of community within the classroom by doing a daily job and having a share day. They are also encouraged to talk about their feelings using books, emotion cards and posters. The preschool director has been trained in The Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) model. The classroom assistant and other support staff will be trained and guided by the director with guidance and expectations.

Please discuss your concerns about behavior with the staff and director. Parents, specialists, or other resources will be encouraged to help support the needs of individual children as needed. This may include observations of individual children in the classroom and meeting together as a support team to discuss ways to support the child or to plan for an IEP or 504 plan.

AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR

Aggression is a normal expression of emotion in young children. They have not yet learned acceptable ways to channel the emotion and redirect the unacceptable behavior (such as hitting, throwing things, name-calling, spitting, biting, pushing, pulling and taking someone's possessions). While aggression among young children can be an expected element of developmental growth, it can be of great concern to all parents/guardians, whether their child is the victim or the aggressor. The first step to addressing any concern is open communication with parents, staff and the Director.

In the event of an aggressive act from one child to another, the injured child will be attended to first, and then aggressive child disciplined appropriately (more information regarding discipline policy is below). Parents may be notified, and in keeping with our confidentiality policy, the names of the involved students will not be disclosed. the following procedure will be implemented:

1. The injured child will be given the necessary first aid and comfort.
2. The aggressive child will be disciplined appropriately as outlined in our discipline policy.
3. Parents/guardians of the injured child and the aggressive child may be notified that day by phone or through written communication, and will be contacted through verbal communication by a staff person at the time of the child's departure.
4. In keeping with our confidentiality policy, the names of the injured child and the aggressive child will not be revealed to the other parents/guardians by any staff.
5. To address a child with persistent aggression, staff and the Director will work closely with the child and parents/guardians to develop and agree on a plan of action based on the child's overall behavior, health, program and environment.

DISCIPLINE

The goal of discipline will be to teach children appropriate forms of behavior, not to punish. We recognize that at this stage of life all behaviors are teachable moments, to be either praised and reinforced or labeled and redirected. All behavior is learned, including negative behavior. Our teachers will focus their feedback to students on the behavior rather than on the child. By focusing often on positive behavior rather than negative behavior we can accomplish this goal. Positive techniques of guidance will be used such as encouragement and positive reinforcement.

To help facilitate learning self-control at the Center:

- The staff will have limits clearly in mind
- Rules or limits will be clear and simple
- Routines and expectations will be clear and modeled often
- There will only be a few limits
- There will be indoor and outdoor limits
- Staff will frequently talk with children that seem frustrated, anxious or sad.
- Children will be comforted and loved at all times.

At no time will a child be struck, verbally abused, or roughly handled as a discipline measure. Outside early childhood professionals such as special educators, early interventionists, and childcare trainers may be contacted to support staff, parents, and students. Prompt determined actions such as a behavior plan will be made for a child exhibiting persistent aggressive behavior. Other ways to help parents better understand persistent aggressive behavior might include literature, workshops, and parent meetings. Families will be provided the opportunity to have additional parent conferences and appropriate community resources will be utilized if the parents/guardians choose.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

DANGEROUS MATERIALS

The possession, use, or distribution of dangerous materials such as fireworks, weapons, tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, or illegal drugs of any kind will not be allowed at school or any school-sponsored activities. No person shall be under the influence while on campus during school hours. Smoking in the presence of children is not allowed during field trips.

MANDATED REPORTING

All Riverside staff are “mandated reporters” and thus have the duty to make faithful and timely reports of suspected abuse or neglect directly to the Department of Children and Families (800-649-5285) within 24 hours. We ask that staff also inform the head of school that a report has been made.

LEAD TEST RESULTS

Riverside annually tests the water in the sinks in the preschool classroom. Our results meet and exceed the health standards. If they did not pass, we would shut down the use of that specific sink and resolve the issue immediately.

STUDENT HEALTH

Common Topical Treatments

Before applying insect repellent, sunscreen, or non-prescription diaper ointment, parents/guardians must provide written permission that specifies the product and delineate the time frame over which permission is given, but not more than the remainder of the school year. That permission may be given as part of completing the Permissions section of the Preschool Enrollment Packet. These are not considered medications and so don’t require a full Medication Administration Form. Preschool students, ages 3-5, shall not apply any of these items independently.

Allergies

Allergies are noted on the child’s Medical Information in the Preschool Enrollment Packet, and they should be communicated verbally to the staff as well. A sign will be posted in the kitchen area to remind staff of allergies. Please make known to director and staff of any accommodations that must be made.

Immunizations

Children are required by VT Child Care Licensing to have an immunization record in their folder before beginning the preschool program. All students’ immunizations must be kept up-to-date. Records of immunization will be kept for each child and parents are requested to provide a new immunization record as vaccinations occur.

Signs and Symptoms

The Signs and Symptoms Chart defines illnesses which require a student to stay home from preschool. These may include illness that prevents them from participating comfortably, requires care from the staff that compromises the safety of other students, congestion, diarrhea, fever, vomiting, or bacterial, viral, or other infections. The complete Exclusion Policy is included at the end of the handbook on page 41, and also posted on the bulletin board in the foyer. Listed below is a brief summary of this chart and our Illness Policy.

Responding to an Ill Child

A cot with the child's bedding will be placed in the mud room away from the other children for any child which is exhibiting excludable symptoms of illness. The child's parents will be notified and expected pickup is within one hour of being informed. Care of the child will continue until their arrival. All items used by the ill child shall be cleaned and disinfected after leaving.

Daily Health Checks

It is the responsibility of the preschool director, upon the arrival of each child, to observe them for symptoms of communicable diseases and signs of injuries. Any obvious injuries shall be documented along with any comments from the parent pertaining to the condition.

Child Accident and Injury Protocol

It is the responsibility of all staff to supervise children and keep them safe. Children do not realize unsafe behavior. In the event that a child in our care is injured or has an accident, immediate action will be taken as follows:

- The child will be assisted immediately by a staff member that has completed First Aid and CPR training.
- One staff member will assist the injured child while the other staff member will tend to other children. If additional staff are needed, other Riverside preschool substitute staff will be called.
- If the injury is minor, parents will be notified as soon as possible by phone or incident report.
- In a serious situation, 911 will be contacted immediately and both parents and one of Riverside's dedicated health care staff will be notified. If parents cannot be reached the emergency contact person on the student's Enrollment Packet will be notified.
- If the child is transported by ambulance, a staff member will drive to the hospital to support the family and help answer any questions about the incident.
- The incident report shall be completed any time there is a mark on a student's body as a result of the incident. An injured child includes a papercut, nose bleed, a scratch that is bleeding, etc. A copy can be made for the parent upon request.
- Any time there is exposure to bodily fluids, staff will use standard precautions.
- Serious injuries (such as animal bites, broken bone, concussion) must be reported to the licenser on duty at the Childcare Development Division.

Medication Administration

Medications will be given by an authorized caregiver or the Director. All personnel who administer medication to any student must have taken the Medication Administration Training. Our procedure for administering medications is as follows:

- All medications (prescription, over-the-counter, asthma and allergy related, or herbal) must be accompanied by a Medication Administration Form, completed by the parent/guardian.
- Medication must be in its original container, properly labeled for the child, and with a sufficient expiration date.
- In the event of a medication incident (failure of appropriate time, correct dosage, or correct child), the preschool director, a doctor, and the parents will be informed. Staff will also complete a Medication Incident Report , to be kept in the student's file and provided to the parent.

THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM/EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

Riverside Staff regularly reflects on emergency response drills and considers potential threats to the school. We have developed an Emergency Operations Plan in collaboration with local authorities and following standards required by Act 29. The Emergency Response Team and Head of School are responsible for identifying and assessing threats to the school.

The Head of School shall ensure that members of the threat assessment team receive training at least annually in the following topics: best practices of conducting threat assessments; identifying and eliminating bias in carrying out the duties of a threat assessment team; State Board of Education Rules governing exclusionary discipline; civil rights laws including Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; negative consequences of exclusion from school; the impact of trauma on brain development. Full explanation of this procedure can be found in the school's Emergency Operations Plan.

When faced with a potential threat by, or directed towards, a student eligible for special education or is a qualified student with a disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the threat assessment team shall include a team member who is a special education teacher.

General Information

- Emergency Contact Numbers:
 - School Number: 802-626-8552
 - Director's Cell Number: 575-770-9069
 - Preschool Teacher's Cell Number: 207-323-4438
 - Head of School's Cell Number: 802-745-8503
 - Emergency- Police, Fire, Ambulance: 911
 - The Pines Nursing Home: 802-626-3361
 - Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222
 - VT Child Development Division: 1-800-649-2642

Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-649-5285
Child Care Helpline: 1-800-649-2642
Child Support Helpline: 1-800-786-3214

- The fire extinguisher is found on the right hand side of the doorway as you enter.
- This facility has designed an ERP team. This team will consist of the town fire chief, local emergency planning committee member, teachers, parents, EMTs, etc. We will meet at least annually to review the ERP. An update of these team members will take place annually. If you are interested in serving on this team or have experience that would be beneficial, please contact the director.
- All staff will have ERP training.
- Evacuation Drills will be conducted monthly and documented on file. Debriefing with all staff will follow these drills.
- There are conditions which generate indoor security measures. Some severe conditions that may be expected in our area include: strong winds or blizzard conditions, lightning strikes, intruders, etc.
- There are conditions which generate outdoor security measures. These severe conditions include: fire, power outages, etc.
- At the back of the Parent Handbook there is an Identification Card. This card must be completed and given to the director upon registration. These cards will be kept in our First Aid Backpack. If there is ever an emergency, they will be pinned to the children's shirts for quick identification.
- There is a First Aid Kit that is replenished as supplies are used in a backpack hanging on the wall, in the foyer. This First Aid Backpack is taken with us with every drill, field trip, or actual emergency. It contains the following:
 - Children's Emergency Information
 - General Field Trip Permission Forms
 - Medication
 - Books, Play Dough, etc.
 - CODE BLUE Plan
 - Pen/ Paper
 - Hand Sanitizer
 - Children's ID Cards
 - Flash Light w/extra batteries
 - Wipes
 - Matches
 - Safety Whistle
- Extra supplies will be kept in the storage room next to the preschool room. These supplies will include canned goods, granola bars, water, disposable cups and bowls, disinfectant wipes and wipes.

ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT

In accordance with 40 CFR Part 763 Subpart E (AHERA), Riverside families should know that Riverside has an Asbestos Management Plan that includes designation of a leader, inspection and management plans, notification of stakeholders, regular surveillance, training for relevant staff, and record keeping. The detailed plan is available in the office of the director of operations, and any further questions can be directed to the head of school.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

OPERATING EXPENSES

The Riverside School has only two sources of revenue: tuition/fee income and development (fundraising events, gifts, grants). Our preschool program alone is also assisted by state funding. All members of The Riverside School community help with development to meet current expenses and to ensure long-term stability. Each student attending Riverside is the beneficiary of many extraordinary acts of generosity on the part of parents, grandparents, staff members, alumni, trustees, and friends.

TUITION/FEES

Tuition for preschool 2025-2026 year has been set by the Board of Trustees at \$12,000 for full time preschool from Augst 27, 2025 - June 5, 2026. Vermont state funding will provide 10 hours per week, or \$3982 of the annual tuition, read more about that below. Divided into 10 monthly payments, parents will be billed \$801.80 each month, unless they receive additional subsidies. Tuition is unconditionally non-refundable.

Tuition helps us to pay for the cost of all aspects of our program, including professional staffing, co-curricular programs, transportation, texts, workbooks, and field trips. Additional fees may accrue and will be billed to the school store account. For the preschool, these fees typically include Wednesday pizza slices, ski equipment rentals, yearbook orders, and extended day charges. School store bills are mailed at regular intervals, however parents may request one from the director of finance and operations at any time.

Tuition Payment Dates

For returning students in good standing, the school will forward a contract to the parent(s) in March.

Tuition is billed and is due monthly; it can be paid weekly if you prefer. The non-refundable deposit of \$300 is due with the signed contract in early spring, a specific deadline is referenced in the contract. For new students accepted after April, the deadline is within ten business days of acceptance. This payment assures the student of a position in the school for the coming school year and must be paid on or before the due date.

Credit cards

Riverside accepts credit card payments. A 3% surcharge will be added to cover the cost to the school.

State Funding - Act 166

In order for Riverside to receive the state funded portion of tuition, students must be residents of Vermont and 3 years old before the start of the school year. A set of forms must be completed and filed in a timely manner. These forms will be mailed to you over the summer

before the school year begins. Please follow the directions within carefully. If you have any questions about them please contact the preschool director.

INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT

Recognizing that income from tuition only covers a portion of Riverside's operating budget, we ask families to recognize that in choosing an independent school they have chosen to support advancement efforts which include: marketing our school through positive reputation, fundraising events, and annual giving. If a parent would like to take a leadership role in helping Riverside with advancement please contact the head of school, who may utilize your skills and interests as part of the advancement committee of the board of trustees or the Parent Advisory Group.

Fundraising

Riverside builds its budget with an expectation that the parent community will collaborate to meet a specific fundraising goal each year. The Parent Advisory Group will work in conjunction with our parents to coordinate leadership and volunteers for such fundraising events, such as the Race Back to School, the Auction (more below), the Yard Sale, student artwork sales, or catalog sales.

The annual Riverside School Auction represents a significant means for the Riverside community to augment the School's operating budget, typically raising almost \$25,000 for our school's program. Trustees, families, students, and alumni are encouraged to solicit and gather donations. Antiques and art, weekend stays at resorts, timeshares, summer or winter homes, donations from retail businesses, a day's labor, a signed book or poster, airline miles, a cord of firewood, a gallon of maple syrup—all are attractive auction offerings. The event is open to the public and includes both a silent and live auction, food and drink, and informal entertainment. The evening is enjoyable and memorable for everyone.

Annual Fund

Riverside families support the annual fund each year. The school receives donations from parents, alumni, past parents, grandparents, trustees, friends, and the staff. Donations to the annual fund are essential and we are grateful for everyone's participation no matter the amount of the gift. Reaching participation goals helps Riverside to exhibit its supportive community and to leverage further contributions. Donations to the Annual Fund are 100% tax-deductible. Gifts of stock and bequests are also greatly appreciated.

Burklyn Arts Council

Burklyn Arts Council, a local not-for-profit run solely by volunteers, funds many of the following: student attendance at artistic performances, funds for our yearly musical performances, teaching residencies with artists, professional development in the arts for teachers, and student scholarships for summer arts opportunities. Burklyn generates its funds through two Crafts Fairs each year, one the first Saturday in July and the other the first weekend in December. Riverside parents help Burklyn by donating home-baked cookies to sell at the December Crafts Fair and by volunteering at both fairs.

SOLICITATION

Soliciting Business Donors and Friends of the School

The Riverside School wants to protect friends and businesses from an overload of requests. We ask for an Annual Fund donation as well as for an Annual Auction donation from our business associates and friends. *Additional requests for donations are prohibited without prior permission from the head of school.*

Soliciting for Other Organizations

We want to support every member of our school, but we cannot allow solicitation of students and staff at school without prior approval from the head of school. Any poster, petition, handout, or flyer must be approved by the head of school before it is posted or distributed. The Policy on Public Solicitations/Advertising in Schools is kept on file at the School.