



RAPHAEL HOUSE  
RUDOLF STEINER SCHOOL



## Parent Handbook

*“A healthy social life is found only, when in the mirror of each soul the whole community finds its reflection, and when in the whole community the virtue of each one is living.”*

*Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925)*



# Tēnā koutou and welcome

I hope that this handbook will answer your questions about Raphael House Rudolf Steiner School. It is filled with lots of helpful information and I ask that you review the contents carefully. If you have questions that remain unanswered after reading this, please feel free to email, phone or stop in at the Office. Any suggestions for improvements for the next edition of the handbook are always welcome and can be given to the PTFA by email: [ptfacommittee@gmail.com](mailto:ptfacommittee@gmail.com).

A big thank you again goes to the Admin Team and the Parents, Teachers and Friends Association (PTFA), who have made this Parents' Handbook possible. Also, thanks again to Cameron Sanders and Simon Burrow who have supplied many of the wonderful images for the handbook and to Dickon Lentell for organising the printing.

Raphael House provides a stimulating, supportive and friendly environment for all, in a kura which celebrates equality and diversity. Our school follows a rich Waldorf curriculum that has evolved over almost one hundred years to meet the needs of children in many different cultures around the world. It creates opportunities for children to think considerately and clearly, to act with creativity, integrity and perception for the world and to enjoy the freedom to become self-reliant individuals ready for the opportunities of the 21st century.

Our experienced and professional team are committed to nurturing your children and encouraging them to reach their potential. This is only possible through a strong partnership between our school and your whānau, as we move together in the spirit of love, curiosity and freedom. I look forward to working with you.

With warmest regards – nga mihi mahana

Na Caroline Gray  
*Principal*



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## Te Pepeha o Raphael House

Ko Tukutuku te maunga

*Tukutuku is the peak of significance*

Ko Wairere te awa

*Wairere is the tributary*

Ko Tirohanga te rohe

*Tirohanga is the suburb*

Ko Te Awakairangi te takiwā

*Te Awakairangi (The Hutt Valley) is the region*

Ko Te Whare o Raphael te kura

*Raphael House is the school*

Ko Rudolf Steiner te tangata

*Rudolf Steiner is the man*

Tihe mouri ora!

*Tis the sneeze o' life!*

# Section A: Our School

## 1. Vision - Moemoeā

*Instilling integrity, creating inner freedom and awakening moral and social responsibility in our students.*

## 2. Mission Statement - Kupu Tauākī

*To help each and every student progress towards becoming a free, responsible and caring individual able to impart purpose and direction in his or her own life and, as a citizen, able to contribute in manifold as well as unique ways to human society.*

## 3. Values - Ngā Uara

- Excellence, Kairangitanga: by aiming high, persevering and having the courage to push through challenges
- Innovation, Auahatanga: inquiry and curiosity - by thinking critically, creatively and reflectively
- Diversity, Kotahitanga: acceptance of different cultures, languages, learning needs and ways of thinking
- Equity, Ture: through fairness and social justice
- Community and Participation, Hapori: having impulse to take action and contribute to the well-being of individuals and wider society
- Ecological Sustainability, Kaitiakitanga: a sense of connection with, and care for, community and the environment
- Integrity, Tika, Pono: by being honest, responsible, accountable and acting ethically
- Respect, Mana: hauora, care for physical, emotional, spiritual and mental health both of self and others



## 4. Origins of Raphael House

Raphael House began with 12 pupils on 11 June 1979 in a rescued, renovated and rented 1920s bungalow at 953 High Street, Avalon. By the end of the first term the school roll was a flourishing 20; by the third term 28 pupils were on the school roll. The following year the school roll doubled and the Matuhi Street site was purchased. On the eve of Christmas 1980 the foundation stone was laid in light rain and celebrated with hearty carolling. In 1986 the whole school was finally housed on the present site. Since then new facilities and landscaping have been developed through the efforts of parents, teachers and friends through fundraising and working bees. Now there are approximately 350 students on the school roll demonstrating the school's growth and success of the original vision.

## 5. School organisation and roles

Raphael House is a state-integrated school under the Private Schools Conditional Integration Act 1975 (**PSCIA**) and a Deed of Integration between the school's "Proprietors", the Rudolf Steiner School Trust (Wellington) (**Trust**). Broadly, this means that the school is partly state funded, but with the land and buildings still owned by the Trust, and the school's "Special Character" protected (more about that later).

Apart from the exceptions relating to our Special Character and the Proprietors, we operate like our state school counterparts. This includes governance and organisational structure, and complying with all National Education Goals and National Administration Guidelines set by the government (in a way that's consistent with our Special Character).

### The Board of Trustees

As a state integrated school, the School's controlling authority is the Board of Trustees. The Board is the Crown entity responsible for the governance and the control of the management of the school. It is the employer of all staff in the school, is responsible for setting the school's strategic direction in consultation with parents, staff and students and the Trust, and for ensuring that the school provides a safe environment and quality education for all its students. The Board is also responsible for overseeing the management of personnel, curriculum, property, finance and administration.

The Board meets monthly and as needed, usually on a Monday evening in the Heide Werth Room at 6.30 pm. Board meetings are listed in the School calendar, advertised in the Bush Telegraph and are open to members of the School community – you're very welcome to attend, and this is one way you can be informed about the School's vision, current activities and issues. Each meeting is minuted and copies of the minutes and correspondence list and reports to the Board are filed and available to view in the Office, along with policies, the strategic plan and the School Charter.

The Board of Trustees comprises five elected Parent Representatives, an elected Staff Representative, an elected Student Representative, up to four appointed Proprietor's Representatives and the Principal. Information about who is on the Board can be viewed on the School Website.

The Board also has a number of subcommittees to help carry out its work, which include non-Board members as appropriate. If you have particular skills that might assist and you're willing to help, please let us know.

To get in touch with the Board please contact the Board Chair: [chair@raphaelhouse.school.nz](mailto:chair@raphaelhouse.school.nz).

### The Principal

The School's Principal is the Board's Chief Executive in relation to the School's control and management. The Principal supervises the Mandate Groups; directly or indirectly manages all staff; and works closely with the College of Teachers (see below) in relation to the School's pedagogical leadership.



The Principal is responsible for:

- providing educational leadership and management of Raphael House
- ensuring that the school is conducted and operated so as to maintain and preserve the school's Special Character as a Rudolf Steiner Waldorf School
- directing and controlling the operation of Raphael House to achieve the goals (financial, educational, spiritual and compliance) set by the Board
- ensuring that the school's community can be confident in Raphael House as the provider of high student learning achievement and certification through an integrated Waldorf education.

## The College of Teachers

The College of Teachers is a group of staff, predominantly teachers in the School, which holds the Rudolf Steiner/Waldorf impulse and provides pedagogical leadership in the School via a system of mandates to cover particular areas of educational responsibility and interest.

*“The College of Teachers which works collegially and in a spiritual way shares responsibility for maintaining the Special Character of the School and the Anthroposophical impulse which is inherent in all aspects of School life.”*

*Extract from Raphael House Integration Deed, 1992*

The Principal is a key member of the College and represents the Parent community and Board of Trustees to this group, as well as ensuring that the College's advice is represented to the Board and the Trust as appropriate.

Members of the College of Teachers have freely identified with the purpose and destiny of Raphael House and the wellbeing of every individual, and in particular the students. Membership on the College of Teachers is entirely voluntary and open to all staff who want to deepen their work with the spiritual principles behind this education. The College comes together in a non-hierarchical way and membership involves individual commitment to personal self-development and self-knowledge for the benefit of pedagogical undertaking of the student body.

The College meets weekly during term time; currently on Wednesdays from 3.30 – 6.00pm.

## The Trust

As a charitable trust and the founding body of the school, the Trust works closely with the College of Teachers and on their behalf carries ultimate responsibility for the wellbeing of Raphael House. The Trust is responsible for supervising the maintenance of the School's Special Character in accordance with the Private Schools Conditional Integration Act 1975 and the Integration Deed.

As the legal owners of the School's land and buildings, the other key task of the Trust is to provide land, buildings and resources for the whole school which is governed by the Board of Trustees. The Trust also remains responsible for the early childhood part of the Kindergarten which is not state-integrated. (Because our Special Character requires mixed-age classes in the early years, and because state schools begin their work with children from age 5 up, the Kindergarten is partly integrated into the Area School – although in practice it is managed on a day-to-day basis by the Principal as part of the School.)

The Trust works closely with the Board of Trustees whose membership includes up to four Proprietor's Representatives. The Trust gives a portion of its income to the Board to help the Board maintain the Waldorf (Special Character) components of the education.

The Trust's main income is derived from parent donations (Special Character Contributions – SCC) but it is also responsible for major fundraising for building and development. See section C for more information about funding.

Working with the College, the Trust is jointly represented on the Federation of Steiner/Waldorf Schools in New Zealand ([www.rudolfsteinerfederation.org.nz](http://www.rudolfsteinerfederation.org.nz)).

Trust membership is by appointment and all trustees are either teachers or ex-teachers, parents or ex-parents, of Raphael House. Trustees are listed on the School website. The Principal attends all of the Trust's monthly meetings and other representatives from school groups attend as needed. The meeting schedule is in the school calendar.

The Trust's work is set out in its Strategic Plan which is available on the School website. Key issues and decisions are regularly reported to the Board and College and are included in newsletters, which the Trust sends out to the school community from time to time. The work is supported by parent volunteers in various committees, and by administrative staff.

## 4. Our 'Special Character' – Rudolf Steiner's educational approach and the Waldorf curriculum

*“The School is a Rudolf Steiner Waldorf School in which Rudolf Steiner's Art of Education is practised. Anthroposophy, its concept of the universe, the world and the human being, is the basis of the art of education and of all endeavour in the School.*

*The education with a Special Character includes festival observances and religious education, which is Christian in its broadest sense, free of dogma or sectarianism.”*

*Extract from Raphael House Integration Deed, 1992*

Waldorf schools educate the whole child in unique ways. They stimulate the mind with the full spectrum of traditional academic subjects, and nurture healthy social development through hands-on, child-centred learning which includes a broad range of artistic, movement, handwork and craft activities. The comprehensive and integrated curriculum recognises that children pass through distinct developmental stages when specific forces are at work and capacities develop, allowing each developmental stage to fully unfold.

“Education towards freedom” is the foundation of Waldorf education; with ‘freedom’ translated by teachers as the voluntary, enthusiastic acceptance of social responsibility. This is what is meant when you see or hear the words:

**“Receive the child in reverence; educate the child with love; let each go forth in freedom.”**

Waldorf education is organic and sequential, and is delivered with four significant elements characteristic of Waldorf education:

- A broad view of the whole child is essential.
- Children have basic educational needs at each chronological age irrespective of their physical or intellectual maturity.
- The teaching perspective begins from a concept of the whole, leading to an understanding of the parts.
- Life influences and human characteristics are considered beyond the parameters of birth and death.



High value is placed on teaching and learning through the arts and movement, not only as stand-alone subjects but also as an integral part of all learning experiences. These activities activate the will and feeling life of the child and support the development of flexible and creative thinking. All subjects, as far as possible, are brought in an artistic way, or through practical experience where doing precedes understanding. Wherever possible, practical activity paves the way for discovery and enquiry, which in turn leads to the formation of concepts.

The New Zealand Steiner/Waldorf Schools are part of a global education movement. There are currently over 1,000 Steiner/Waldorf Schools and 1,600 Kindergartens in 60 countries worldwide. The principles that are fundamental to Steiner/Waldorf Education are able to be adapted to the needs of different ethnicities, cultures, and religions. Curriculum content allows for the exploration of a wide variety of cultural traditions and world views.

The curriculum gives equal importance to nurturing the physical, emotional, and intellectual aspects of the child, requiring specific learning experiences to be brought to students at particular times and in certain ways. Steiner/Waldorf Education aims to support the development of the whole child and this principle guides teaching and learning in every class. The active study and observation of children is at the heart of teacher development and is, therefore, at the heart of curriculum development and delivery.

All students participate in all subjects regardless of their special aptitudes, because the curriculum is designed to provide a balanced development of educating the whole human being: in thinking, feeling and willing, so that as they reach adulthood they can master their own lives with integrity and full autonomy.

The concepts discussed above, along with some more specific things you'll hear a lot about that make us different, set out below, are what make up the School's 'Special Character', which we are all committed to upholding.

- The Board, the Trust and the Principal all have responsibilities to maintain and preserve the School's Special Character.
- Parents and guardians of students in the School need to have an established connection with the Special Character of the School for their children to be enrolled here.

## Festivals

Festivals form an integral part of the School's Special Character and classroom life and are a thread which is woven through the curriculum.

Students and staff prepare for a festival in the weeks leading up to it through: colour and movement, drama and poems, song and stories. These rhythms and experiences provide nourishment for the soul and spirit. Through the cycle of the festivals we give our attention to the world around us, to elements of the daily environment in which we live and work. This enables us to rediscover nature's patterns and our connection to the natural world around us, renewing our sense of belonging.

*"The festivals are nodal points of the year which unite us with the Spirit of the Universe."*

*Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925)*

The festival of **Easter** is where we celebrate the beginning of a new creation, of new life. The coming of Easter is marked by the turning of the year at the Equinox and the full moon immediately following this. This indicates the link between the Cosmos and the Earth that was initiated in the most profound way two millennia ago. A whole-school assembly is held as we prepare for the Easter period. The Lower School decorate eggs which are blown and cleaned. These beautiful creations are taken home to hang or place in a special place.

**Pentecost/Whitsun** is celebrated in term 2. This is the festival of the Holy Spirit, the divine force that became an inner flame, giving inspiration to the Apostles, so that they could carry Christianity into the world each with their own understanding, beyond distinctions of race or culture. At Whitsun we celebrate the Spirit of Community: that which

enables human beings to meet, true to their own individuality while acknowledging and respecting the individuality of the other, and recognising what it is that binds us as humanity. This is a celebration of human spirituality that belongs to all of humankind - not specific to race, culture or religion: we demonstrate interest, consideration, care and kindness between human beings. A quiet Lower School assembly is held to bring the picture of Pentecost to the children. Candles are lit by Class Seven and songs are sung by the school.

**Matariki** (Māori New Year) in mid-winter celebrates the importance of the inner light that we need to nurture through the dark months of winter. This is celebrated through the rituals of daily life that provide nourishment and protection from the extremes of Winter: log fires, story telling, bread baking, music making, crafts, the warmth and intimacy of human companionship. Matariki links the human lights on earth to starlight. Classes 1–7 are involved in lantern making building up to our Matariki festival, which takes place in the evening. Families are invited to participate in a lantern walk, followed by a community bonfire and singing event. Afterwards parents accompany their children to their classrooms to share in soup and buns.



The **Raphael Festival – Michaelmas** is a spring festival in term 3 and celebrates the importance of coming together and doing good for all. Simple kites are made by the children cutting, shaping and constructing in the week prior to this Festival. Classes One, Two and Three meet with their whanau/families and fly their kites on the green by the Kindergarten. Before the kites are flown Class Three performs a series of Maypole dances followed by a shared fruit picnic. Classes 4–7 take their kites to a local reserve. There is a ‘good deed’ done where the community participate in a beach clean up, followed by a picnic and then the flying of their beautifully prepared and crafted kites.

The mood of summer, which is part of the Southern Hemisphere’s Christmas, tends to lead us out into the world and its elements rather than draw us into inner reflection. **Advent** begins four weeks prior to Christmas and can be brought to the children each week by recognising one of the four Kingdoms of Nature: minerals, plants, animals and then human. This celebration culminates with the shepherds meeting Joseph and Mary and with the arrival of the Christ child on Christmas day.

## Main lesson

In Steiner/Waldorf schools like ours, a large part of the curriculum is presented through extended “main lessons” in the mornings, which focus on one subject in depth. The main lesson ties one topic to as many disciplines as possible, and is not taught from a textbook. The teacher will usually draw a coloured chalk drawing on the blackboard to introduce the theme or subject. The structure of the lesson will include activities that call upon the child’s powers of listening, of body movement, of thinking, and of feeling. These activities could include maths, games, physical activities, creative activities, poetry recitation, singing, and writing and drawing in “main lesson books”.

In the Upper School, students are taught by subject specialists rather than a class teacher. However, the “main lesson” structure remains.

## Eurythmy

Eurythmy is taught where possible at most class levels throughout the School. It is a movement art, usually performed to poetry or music, created by Steiner and “meant to help children develop harmoniously with mind, body and soul”.

The gestures in the eurythmist’s movement repertoire relate to the sounds and rhythms of speech, to the tones and rhythms of music and to soul experiences, such as joy and sorrow. Once these fundamental repertoire elements are learned, they can be composed into free artistic expressions. The eurythmist also cultivates a feeling for the qualities of straight lines and curves, the directions of movement in space (forward, backward, up, down, left, right), contraction and expansion, and colour. The element of colour is also emphasized both through the costuming, usually given characteristic colours for a piece or part and formed of long, loose fabrics that accentuate the movements rather than the bodily form, and through the lighting, which saturates the space and changes with the moods of the piece.

Eurythmy is also used therapeutically, to compensate for physical or psychological imbalances; the aim is to strengthen the organism’s capacity to heal itself.

## Religion

As part of the School’s Special Character, religious observances and religious instruction form part of the School programme at all levels. Anthroposophy is not taught as a religion, but is a reference point for teachers and the School’s philosophical foundation; and its concept of the universe, the world and the human being is woven through lessons. Religion is taught in its broadest sense, free of dogma or sectarianism, and festivals are observed (see above).

At Raphael House, religion lessons are holistic and non-sectarian. We cover the world’s great stories and are non-denominational, with all faiths and spiritual traditions respected. All teaching is in story form with themes of self-sacrifice, compassion, endeavour, courage but also ingratitude, jealousy, hard-heartedness, vanity and countless other qualities common to human behaviour. All stories integrate science, art and religion with the emphasis for the younger children on a sense of wonder, gratitude and love.

The lessons are without dogma or interference and are delivered through narrative, music, and a sense of reverence and awe in the world.

See the Religious Instruction policy for more information (available through the link to our policies on the School’s website).

## Verses and Waiata

Through song and verse we deepen our experiences and appreciation of the world around us. Living today can be a challenge with its pace and pressure, stresses and media role models! Movement deprivation and living in the moment are constantly being compromised. Through verse and song/waiata we pause and ponder for a moment appreciating what is before us, what has been and what is to come; with Birthday verses, morning circle, blessings prior to eating, thankfulness for Mother Nature, sharing with one another, and a general recognition/acknowledgement of the spiritual world.

## Camps

Camps are an important part of our school programme and Special Character. They are carefully planned by teachers for the particular class year and incorporate activities that help students to cross important thresholds. When our Class 12 students reflect back on their school years, camps are always a highlight.

Right through their time at school students at Raphael House participate in a graduated and rich curriculum of outdoor education. These camps start locally and extend eventually to a wide variety of environments in New Zealand. They will include a “Greek Olympics” camp, geology and environmental studies, skiing, river rafting, farming, biking, work experience, surveying, rites of passage camps and challenging multi-day tramps.

At Raphael House we regard camps and outdoor activities as an essential aspect of a healthy and balanced education, encouraging physical fitness, self-reliance and teamwork, where Nature requires engagement, and so becomes the teacher.

The camps follow a general guideline, but will vary from year to year according to circumstance and the particular needs of each class, especially in the Lower School.

<b>Class Three</b>	A 3 day camp, held at Camp Kaitoke in recent years, is great for class bonding and individual confidence building. An overnight stay in the Pine Forest in the huts the children have made themselves, is often the culmination of the house building main lesson.
<b>Class Four</b>	A 4 day camp at Castlepoint and the travel to get there, ties in particularly with the local geography main lesson.
<b>Class Five</b>	Our students participate in the "Greek Olympics", held near Hastings, together with the Class Five students from most Steiner Schools in NZ; a 4–5 day camp in November linking to a main theme of the year, Ancient Greece. Some years, a camp is also held early in the year, linking in with the NZ geography and botany Main Lessons.
<b>Class Six</b>	A 5 day camp in the Wairarapa, focussing on geology.
<b>Class Seven</b>	Fitting in with the theme of the year, "age of exploration", the class go further afield and try something totally different – a week of skiing at Tukino and living in an alpine environment, which they have worked hard to raise funds for while in Class Six. Some years the class also heads out for a 2–3 day tramp later in the year.
<b>Class Eight</b>	This first year in the Upper School is started with a 5 day adventure camp in the Wairarapa, which includes cycling, rafting, abseiling and caving. It helps bond the influx of new students into the class social unit, in the context of challenging outdoor activities. At the end of the year, the students participate in the 7 day Threshold camp in the Tararua ranges, a themed camp dealing with crossing the threshold from childhood to young adulthood.
<b>Class Nine</b>	The Tongariro 5 day camp in central North Island early in the year is a field trip which is part of the geology main lesson. At the end of the year the students have an opportunity to challenge themselves on the 'Find your Limit' 4 day tramp in the Tararuas.
<b>Class Ten</b>	A trip down the Wanganui River in Canadian canoes fits neatly in with the history of NZ main lesson. And towards the end of the year, there is a trigonometry and surveying camp on a Central Hawkes Bay farm.
<b>Class Eleven</b>	A 5 day trip to walk the beautiful Abel Tasman track is held at the beginning of the year.
<b>Class Twelve</b>	Class 12 walk the Waikaremoana track early in the year, and head off for the 'Rites of Passage' camp later in the year.

## Approach to technology

Television and computer use is considered detrimental to the development and aims of Waldorf Education, especially in the Kindergarten and Lower School years. Our children should be engaged in active play, interacting with real people and experiencing the world through all their senses rather than being immersed in computer games or television programmes. In the educational context of a Steiner/Waldorf School the appropriate developmental time for acquiring computer literacy is seen to be the high school years. At this time the faculty for critical judgement enables students to make discriminating choices and have a healthy relationship with electronic media.

Kindergarten children never use computers, and Lower School children do not use computers at school except in special circumstances where there is a specific learning need.

## Importance of community and our Social Contract

An aspect of our Special Character is that in Steiner/Waldorf schools, we believe that to get the most out of our school we need to truly be part of a community and understand the education and all it has to offer. This is achieved by supporting and participating in school events and activities as much as we can. Parental involvement is essential for the success and

life of our school and our children's Steiner/Waldorf education – intellectually (through deepening our own understanding of the education – the School offers adult education and a rich variety of resources in the parent library to assist with this), spiritually, practically, and also financially, so that the School can offer all that's needed to enable a true holistic Steiner/Waldorf education (see section C below for more information on funding and finances).

We believe that a strong partnership between home and School results in the best possible environment for our children to learn in. The education which we have chosen for our children relies on this. Understanding and integrating a child's home, community and culture into their education is the foundation for a respectful partnership. Just as parents need to understand and commit to the School's Steiner/Waldorf educational approach, teachers need to understand the everyday lives and cultures of our children and their whanau/families to be effective, and they can only do this with your involvement and support.

## 5. Biculturalism and Multiculturalism at Raphael House

Raphael House is steeped in a philosophy that strives to “nurture, and help to develop each student's physical capabilities, the artistic and emotional development, and the intellectual and cognitive abilities”. Raphael House shares many of its values and principles with other cultures.

Raphael House has a strong commitment to living the Treaty of Waitangi and ensuring this is reflected throughout the fabric of the school. The school and teachers strive to ensure a culturally located Waldorf curriculum that reflects all of our diversity. Emphasis is also placed on meeting the needs of all children irrespective of religion, creed, culture or physicality.

At Raphael House we believe it is our on-going duty of care to continually reflect and learn. We are committed to taking actions to ensure that what we do in our teaching and relationships with the school communities reflects our Waldorf education principles and our commitment to equity and The Treaty of Waitangi. The specific actions taken each year to grow and strengthen this are located within the school's Charter and annual planning.

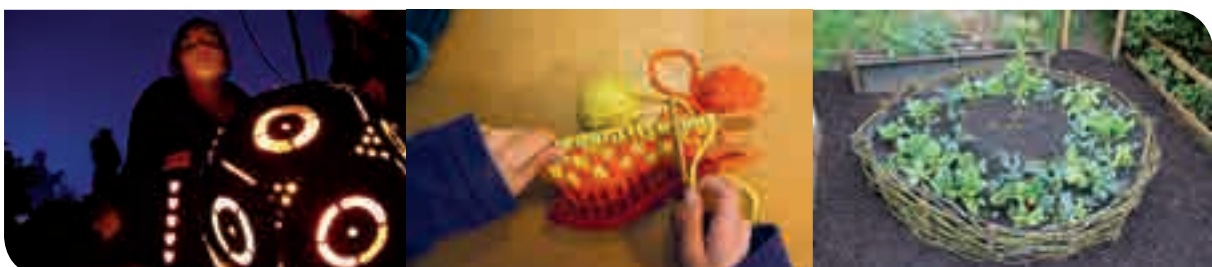
Raphael House endorses and upholds the New Zealand Federation of Rudolf Steiner Waldorf Schools **Equity Statement**:

*“Steiner/Waldorf schools are responsive to the wider cultural, social and political contexts in which they are located in Aotearoa New Zealand in the 21st century. Our schools embrace and honour Aotearoa New Zealand's bi-cultural heritage and consider all human beings to be free and equal in dignity and rights.*”

*The Steiner Federation acknowledges Rudolf Steiner's work. The Steiner school movement in Aotearoa New Zealand works out of an approach of equity and rejects strongly any historical statements from which inferences of racial prejudice may be made. Steiner/Waldorf schools and teacher training centres are culturally safe havens for all.”*

*The Federation of Rudolf Steiner Waldorf Schools in New Zealand's Curriculum Guidelines state that, “the principles that are fundamental to Steiner/Waldorf education are that it is accessible to, and able to be adapted to, the needs of different ethnicities, cultures and religions. Curriculum content allows for the exploration of a wide variety of cultural traditions and world views. Steiner/Waldorf schools in Aotearoa New Zealand strive to imbue their curricula with the unique spirit and history of this land and its peoples.”*

<http://www.rudolfsteinerfederation.org.nz/equity-statement>



## 6. Other cultural and community activities

There are numerous community activities and events which stream through the school year providing opportunities to recognise and/or celebrate the rich diversity of our community, seasonal changes and festive and cultural traditions. Each celebration holds the thread of valuing the coming together and uniting as a community; whether it be class, school or whole community.

The Matariki Fair, the Toy Craft and Food Fair, advent wreath making, adult education including the regular “Winter Lectures”, class plays and parent/whanau coffee mornings are among just some of these valued traditions. Information about the events is communicated through the School Newsletter “The Bush Telegraph” and class communications.





# Section B - Your child at school

## 1. School Hours and attendance

### School hours

Kindergarten	8.45 am – 12.45 pm (for 'half day' children) or 8.45 am – 2.45pm (for whole day children)
Lower School (Class 1–7)	8.55 am – 2.55 pm
Upper School (Class 8–12 )	8.20 am – 2.55 pm
Morning Break (Classes 1–7)	10.50 am – 11.10 am
Morning Break (Classes 8–12)	10.10 am – 10.30 am
Lunch Break (all)	12.40 pm – 1.30 pm

Kindergarten and Lower School children may arrive at school from 8.30am, and Upper School students from 8.00am – not earlier. Kindergarten children need to be collected promptly at the end of their school day; Lower School children and Upper School students need to have left the School grounds by 3.30pm unless they are involved in an organised after school activity. Please do not drop your children at School or Kindergarten before the stated times or let them stay longer at School on their own.

### Punctuality

Please ensure that your children arrive at school on time, so that they are in their classroom ready to begin the day at the stated start times. It is more difficult for a child arriving late to enter and settle in the classroom, and latecomers disrupt the morning circle and the main lesson time for the rest of the class.

If a child is late (the green 'GO' sign in the office window is replaced by a red 'STOP' sign at the start of the Lower School day), they must pick up a late card from the Office and provide this to their teacher. If a student has a valid reason for being late, then you can write a note stating the students name, class and reason. This note should be presented at the Office when the student is obtaining a late card.

### Absenteeism

If your child is going to be absent from school please notify the Office before 8:30 am by either:

- leaving a message on the school's 24-hour answer phone by calling (04) 569 5161.
- delivering a note to or visiting the Office
- texting 3255 to let us know – start your message with our school number 0133 (space) then your 'message'  
e.g. 0133 Colin Ryan Cl 1 Sick today.

Please state the name of your child, the class they are in and the reason for their absence. If you know that the absence will be for more than one day, please state this clearly when notifying the Office. Please contact the Office **each day** a child is absent unless you have notified the Office of the exact period of absence.

At the beginning of the day the teacher lets the Office know of any children who are absent. If the Office has not been contacted by a parent or caregiver they will contact you to check on your child.

## Late arrivals and early departures

Students must have a signed note from a parent or caregiver in order to be given permission to leave the school during the school day. The note needs to state the student's name, class and the reason they need to leave. The student needs to show the note to their teacher and then take the note to the Office where they are to sign out. When students return from an appointment, they must sign in at the Office.

## Longer absences

Parents or caregivers are required to apply for permission for student absences longer than 5 days (with the exception of absence for medical reasons) by writing to the Principal with the dates of the requested absence and the reasons for it; for example family circumstances.

All students are required, under the Education Act, to attend a full school year, except where there are medical or other justified personal or family reasons for periods of absence. The School is responsible for ensuring student attendance. We are concerned when students miss the start or end of school terms due to extended holidays as they miss parts of the structured learning programmes offered.

If a student is absent from school for more than twenty consecutive school days and the Principal has not been notified of the absence, then, in accordance with Regulation 11 of the Education (School Attendance) Regulations 1951, the student will be taken off the school roll and the Ministry of Education will be advised.

## 2. Behaviour and dress expectations

Managing behaviour relies on consistently applying both a formal discipline plan and promote positive student behaviour. We use Restorative Practices as a framework to support positive changes in behaviour at all levels. Both the Lower School Expectations for Behaviour and the Upper School Expectations for Behaviour can be viewed on the SchoolDocs website via the school website.

### Bullying and harassment

Bullying and harassment are unacceptable behaviour and are taken very seriously by our School. Raphael House is committed to ensuring that all students and staff are able to work and learn in a safe environment, free from harassment. No student should be afraid of going to School for fear of being harassed or degraded and no parent should need to worry about this happening to their child.

Our School has bullying and harassment policies which can be viewed via the policies link on the School website.

If you are concerned about behaviour that is happening at school, please contact your class teacher in the first instance. You can follow up with the Co-ordinator for your area of the school if you remain unhappy with the situation and the way it is being managed.

There is a spectrum of both situations and behaviours that lead to rules being broken, and in most situations the specific issues and conditions of the case require individual consideration in order for students to feel fairly treated.



## Drugs, Alcohol and Smoking

It is an offence to:

- smoke or possess cigarettes on or within the vicinity of School property.
- come to School under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol.
- possess or consume alcohol at School or at School events.
- possess, use or trade illegal drugs on School property or at School events.

For more information on the policy and procedures relating to this please follow the links on our School website.

## Dress Code

Part of the Special Character of Raphael House is that we do not have a School uniform. However, we expect a reasonable standard of dress at School at all times. The Dress Code sets out what the School requires to ensure that students' dress is appropriate for school activities and acceptable in appearance, and can be found in our policies and procedures linked from the School website.

In short, students' dress should be appropriate, comfortable, clean and neat (not ripped or torn) and be plain with no images or words.

Common sense is required at all times to cope with the fast-changing weather conditions on our site – weatherproof and warm clothes, including hats, should be available (extra items of clothing may be left on the child's clothes peg outside the classroom in a named drawstring bag – sun hat, woollen hat, raincoat, cardigan, slippers, and for younger children extra underwear and trousers/shorts or skirt). Please name clothing.

## Mobile phones and electronic devices

Students are not allowed to use cell phones or music playing devices on School property before, during or after school and must keep these items in their school bag, out of sight. All mobile phones are required to be switched off before entering the School site. Use of these devices is also not permitted on school camps, trips or at school events unless specific teacher permission has been given for their use. Where the above conditions are not observed cell phones or music playing devices will be confiscated. On the first infringement the device will be returned 24 hours after confiscation, on the second infringement the device will be returned 7 days after confiscation and on the third infringement the device will be returned on the last day of term.

In the Lower School we encourage children NOT to bring expensive items of clothing, electronics (cell phones, smart phones, music players) or money to school. There is a locked box provided for Classes 5–7 for any cell phones or valuables that are brought in to be stored during the school day.

## Taking photos and videos at School events

We ask that during live performances at School children are not photographed or videoed. Flashing cameras and the taking of a photograph can be intrusive and distracting for the children and the audience and it can distract from the performance. Please check with teachers when it is appropriate to take photos as there are many opportunities where you can photograph the activities of the class without it being intrusive and taking away from the child's experience.

## 3. Schoolwork and qualifications

### The Steiner School Certificate

The Steiner School Certificates are secondary school qualifications which are owned and quality-managed by the Federation of Rudolf Steiner Waldorf Schools in New Zealand Inc, who accredit providers (normally schools) to deliver the programme and award the Steiner School Certificates at Levels 1, 2 and 3.

These qualifications are approved by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) and are registered on the New Zealand Qualifications Framework. This means that there is a public profile of the qualifications, which assures the users of the certificates that the qualifications meet the New Zealand Qualification Framework Levels 1, 2 and 3 (like NCEA does). The Steiner School Certificate Level 3 endorsed with University Entrance provides for entry into New Zealand Universities.

For more information on the Certificates please refer to the School website.

### Homework

Homework is given by some teachers in the Lower School, when they feel their class is ready.

In the Upper School students will be given homework by their teachers. Details of the homework will be given in the classroom and will include due dates. It is the student's responsibility to record the homework tasks and work deadlines they are given.

Please see our Home Learning policy and the Upper School Homework Guidelines in our policies and procedures linked from the School website for more information.

### School Library

The School Library is located in the Class 5/6 block opposite the Eurythmy Room. All students are automatically enrolled to borrow books and Lower School classes have timetabled library spells. The library caters for our entire school age range – Class One to Class 12 – with a large and regularly updated collection of fiction and non-fiction books.

Books are issued for 3 weeks. Please take an interest in and keep track of the books your child borrows and ensure they are returned on time (due date stamped in back of book). We ask parents to help their children to become responsible library users, taking good care of books, returning them on time and remembering which day they have a library visit.

Parents are also welcome to enrol as library users at both the School Library and the Parent Library. The School Library has many books suitable for adult readers as well as a great selection of good children's fiction that you might like to borrow to read to your children. Please contact the librarian to arrange to become a borrower. There is also a specific parent library (see below).

Parents will be charged the replacement cost for books lost or damaged beyond repair.

## 4. Health and Safety

The School has a Health, Safety and Welfare policy and a number of supporting policies and procedures, available by linking to our policies and procedures from the School website. Some key points and some other helpful information are included here.

### Sickness

In general, children should stay away from School when they are ill, have a fever or cause concern with little energy. Any child with diarrhoea or vomiting should stay away for 24 hours after the symptoms have disappeared to ensure they are well and will not infect others.

Please let us know about any infectious diseases immediately. Children with infectious diseases (measles, mumps, school sores, chicken pox etc) need to be kept home from school until they are fully recovered and no longer contagious.

If children become sick during school time Lower School teachers take the children to the sick bay and Upper School students go to the Upper School Coordinator. If necessary parents or caregivers will be contacted and the appropriate action taken. In the event of an emergency an ambulance will be called. Kindergarten children who become unwell are looked after by the Kindergarten teachers who will contact you if your child becomes sick during the day and needs to go home.

## Accidents

Any accidents that occur in the School are recorded in either the First Aid Book (in the Kindergarten) or in the Hazards Register (in the School). Details of what happened, when, the injury and the treatment are recorded. Many of the teachers have First Aid Certificates. Significant accidents will be reported to you in person or by phone, for example, head injuries.

## Vision and hearing testing

A Hearing and Vision Nurse visits the Kindergarten and School from time to time to test the children of Kindergarten, Class One and Class Six. The nurse will notify parents by letter if something is found to be wrong and gives advice on request. This is a free five minute test covering the basics. These tests are non-invasive and parents do not need to be present. Parents will be notified when these tests are going to take place through the Bush Telegraph and/or the School notice board.

We encourage parents not to rely solely on these tests, but to remain very alert to the two senses of Vision and Hearing – so vital for learning. Please note that parents may request their children not to be tested.

## Dental service

Bee Healthy Regional Dental Service is the community based dental service for all children in the greater Wellington region aged between 0–18.

The Naenae Intermediate Dental Clinic (**100 Walters Street, Avalon, Lower Hutt, ph. 0800 TALKTEETH – 0800 825 583**) provides a free dental service for children from Class 1–7 and is open from Monday to Friday. Please contact the dental clinic to enrol your child for gaining and maintaining their oral health with annual check-ups. If your child develops any trouble between checks-ups contact the Dental Therapist at the Clinic.

Class 8–12 students are also entitled to free dental (not orthodontic) care: contact the Clinic for an up-to-date list of dentists that offer free dental care for adolescents.

## Headlice

Headlice are classified as a communicable disease in New Zealand and are a recurring problem at every School. Children with headlice (or where the Principal suspects they have headlice) can be precluded from attending School under the Education Act 1989.

To prevent an infestation, we ask that you check your child's scalp and hair roots once a week (lice may be hard to detect, especially in blond hair), vigorously brush the hair daily and comb



the hair with a very fine-toothed comb thoroughly at least once a week. If you find headlice or eggs please treat them straight away and please let your child's teacher know so that we can ask all parents to check their children's hair and treat if necessary. Health Food Shops and chemists have appropriate treatments. We request that no child attend Kindergarten or School with untreated headlice.

## Anthroposophical Nurses

Anthroposophical nursing therapies bring another element to conventional nursing. It recognises and supports the whole human being which encompasses a self, a soul and a physical body. This view enables therapies to support illness, healing or maintaining wellness in an inclusive way. Contact details for the Nurses are:

Brionie Feast	37 Pretoria Street, ph 566-1825 or 021 484 777
Sheryl Trigg	129 Normandale Road, ph 589 0260 or 021 0235 6975
Marcia Pollock	25 Acacia Avenue, ph 589 7923 or 027 246 9883
Tessa Therkluson	Rato Health, 90 Pomare Road, ph 566 2743

## Other Therapies

There are a number of other therapies available which enhance wellness and/or support children and adults with achieving their academic and social goals. For more information please contact Janet Thomson from the Aurora Association on 04-5653644. Therapies include:

**Curative Eurythmy** to restore health and balance through movement. Eurythmy works with movement and gestures related to both the sounds of language and to physiological processes within the body. It stimulates the life forces and powers of healing which are present in each of us.

**Extra Lesson.** This is an intervention therapy based on the idea that learning difficulties are related to developmental issues, stemming from the first seven years of life. When a child does not develop these stages thoroughly academic learning difficulties can occur in later years.

**Auditory retraining therapy** to treat auditory processing disorders and improve posture, attention, communication, memory, energy levels, achievement in literacy and numeracy. This can be very helpful for those with sensory integration, learning or emotional regulation difficulties, poor social skills or generalised immaturity.

## Vaccinations

We encourage all parents to make an informed choice about vaccinations. Please see the Immunisation Advisory Centre's website [www.immune.org.nz](http://www.immune.org.nz), contact your own doctor or one of the Anthroposophical nurses for any questions regarding vaccinations. These are free at your local health centre and are not offered at school.

## Administration of Medicines

We would prefer not to give children any medicine during School hours. If your child needs some form of medication you must give us written permission and clear instructions. We will confirm this with a copy from our First Aid Register. Homeopathic and other remedies for First Aid are only given if you have given permission in your Enrolment forms.

Please see our Medicines Policy, available through the School website, for more information.



## 5. Civil Defence

Raphael House has a full Civil Defence plan and our staff are trained on an ongoing basis in their various roles (First Aid, Search & Rescue etc.). Upper School students also receive some training. Regular drills are held to ensure that staff and students know what to do in an emergency. The Principal is the School's Civil Defence Manager and will be in overall charge in a declared civil defence emergency.

Each year parents will be asked to confirm details about family, health professionals and other contact people in case of an emergency, along with particular information we need to know about any special dietary (allergy) or medical needs of their children. It is a parental responsibility to keep the office informed of any changes.

Raphael House is a designated Civil Defence (CD) Centre. Because of this we have a Civil Defence radio which allows direct communication between other CD centres. This link will be vital in the event of an emergency to obtain assistance and to relay messages to parents.

To assist the School in its planning and in caring for your child(ren) in an emergency, please read the following carefully:

### Communication and Pupil Release in an emergency

In the initial stages following an emergency, priority will be given to emergency communications so patience will be required. When the volume of communications allows, messages may be relayed from the Lower Hutt Headquarters to the CD centre you nominate and messages can be relayed to the School in the same manner.

Please find out the name of the CD centre nearest to your normal day-time location. This is the centre to which we would relay initial radio messages.

If families are separated and no communication is possible, it can be a source of great anxiety; this can be lessened by having a pre-determined plan. Discuss with your children what you will do in various circumstances and keep a note of your decisions for reference. Each year parents will be asked to set up plans with their children in case of an emergency whilst travelling to and from School. It is recommended that you tape a (laminated or plastic-wrapped) copy of the agreed emergency procedure to the inside of your child's bag for reference.

#### **If an emergency does occur while we are at school the following will happen:**

- Students will gather with staff at designated assembly points in an evacuation.
- A roll will be taken immediately after and key staff will sweep the site for any unaccounted-for children and adults.
- A decision will be made on whether to close and parents and caregivers will be informed if children need to be collected. A text will be sent out using the school texting system.
- Where possible an email will be sent and the school website updated with information.

- We will use Newstalk ZB radio station for announcements 89.3FM and 1035AM.
- A collection point will be set up on our site where parents/caregivers will wait. Visitors will not be allowed to wander around the site looking for the children in their care; the children will be released to parents and caregivers named on the Civil Defence form. This is for everyone's safety, both in terms of negotiating potential hazards and managing people in a disaster situation.
- Students who use public transport to get home will not be released until we know that the buses and trains are running again. Parents will be informed.
- If all is well a 'shout out' text will be sent letting you know everyone is safe.

Please, please always make sure the school has your most up to date contact details – new mobile, new landline, new address, new email, and new doctor. Your child's well-being and safety is our priority. Please note that in the event of an emergency, the School gates will be locked and students will only be released by the central control office. This ensures that all students are accounted for at all times. Class teachers will have no authority to release children. No students, irrespective of their age, will be allowed to leave the School premises, unless they are collected by a parent or other nominated person.

The release area will be as close as practical to the Office, and anyone picking up children must report there. No-one will be allowed on site without the authorisation of the Civil Defence Manager or his/her deputy.

As mentioned above, students will only be released to parents or a pre-nominated adult (as indicated on the CD form) who comes to the School to collect them.

## Food Supplies for an Emergency

The School holds an emergency supply of dry and canned food (rice, pasta, grains, beans, fruit etc.) and the kitchen holds other basic supplies. There is also an emergency supply of water. If your child has a food allergy or medical condition necessitating special food or medication, please send a supply, with instructions, to your child's class teacher. There will be requests each year for families to contribute food to the emergency supply.





# Section C - Working together – Home and School

## 1. Parent Involvement in the School

Your child will benefit the most if you travel along on his or her journey, learning what is happening in the classroom and developing an in-depth understanding of the anthroposophical picture of child development. This picture of the child as an incarnating being of body, soul, and spirit, whose individual capacities are supported by the teacher and the parents to unfold in an unhurried manner, is at the core of the Waldorf Curriculum. The better informed you are about the School's intentions, the more effective your support will be for your child and their teacher.

There are many ways in which your help or involvement is appreciated. These include:

- attending class meetings
- attending and participating in Festivals
- attending Parent Education sessions
- assisting with class trips and camps
- assisting with class activities (eg handwork, swimming, reading and maths programmes)
- managing, coaching or umpiring a sports team
- becoming a Class Parent Representative
- assisting with working Bees
- assisting with fundraising
- assisting with the Toy, Craft and Food Fair
- becoming a member of the Board of Trustees or one of its subcommittees, the PTFA, or any of the several other support groups in the School (see below for more information on these)

## 2. Finances

The Board receives public money to run the School and is accountable for how that money is spent. It also receives funding from parents – a portion of the Special Character Contribution donation (SCC) to the Trust is paid to the Board to support the additional expenses involved in offering a Special Character education.

### Special Character Contribution

Our school is built on a strong community and the spirit of selflessness to which Rudolf Steiner often referred. We see this evidenced every day by our teachers' huge commitment, as parents with our children and our involvement in our community. The Waldorf curriculum builds this sense of contributing within our children from Kindergarten right through to the Upper School so that our graduates have a strong sense of giving, selflessness and connection.

It is in that spirit that we seek your commitment to the gifting process which is known as the 'Special Character Contribution donation' – SCC. The SCC covers the Trust's own costs including insurance of the school buildings and Trust-specific salaries; the Trust's contribution to the Board to enable the School to provide a Special Character education (this includes additional teacher salaries over Ministry entitlement; costs that specifically relate to the School's Special Character including festivals

and our unique learning environment; learning support salaries and equipment – we do far more curative, therapeutic and learning support work with our students than other schools); and a proportion is put towards future development of the School buildings and site.

At Raphael House we deliver a well-rounded education that is widely acknowledged by universities as producing a maturity in our students that is unique in the way they embrace learning with a creative spirit. We can only achieve this with your help. To put it simply, a state education is delivered by state schools but to deliver a Steiner education this requires a lot of extra effort and costs. Just think about the extra subjects that are built into the curriculum and need to be funded from parent donations. Your financial gift directly supports our specialist subject teachers such as Eurythmy, Music, Handwork, Woodwork, languages and many extra curriculum components that Kindergarten and class teachers provide.

Our annual appeal is vital to your children's Waldorf education. Please respond with your generosity as much as you can in your own personal situation. In our giving to the community, we model this selflessness to our children.

Each year a suggested donation level per child is requested by the Trust. Pledge forms are sent to parents, along with a letter of explanation. The Trust requests that the forms are completed and returned promptly so that the total donation pledged by parents can be included in the next year's budget. Parents can assist by returning the forms promptly, arranging for this donation to be made through automatic payments, and contacting the Trust treasurer if there is any difficulty in making the promised donation to the school. We hope that everyone is as generous as they can be in trying to meet the suggested donation level each year.

Special Character Contribution donations are voluntary. However, they are essential to the School's financial well-being and they are tax deductible. The account number for these contributions is: Westpac 03 0531 0379910 003.

The Trust has chosen not to levy compulsory attendance dues to parents to cover property operating costs incurred as many integrated schools do, preferring to continue to rely on voluntary, tax-deductible donations to cover those costs. As well as not allowing parents to claim a tax rebate for a third of their payment as they can for the SCC, attendance dues incur a 15% GST charge. This decision is subject to ongoing review and may need to change in future if donations are not sufficient to cover costs.

## Disbursements/donations

The School acknowledges the importance of using quality materials and will supply these to students. Disbursement donations are requested to cover the materials the School uses, along with some activities. This means that we do not provide a list of all the materials parents need to separately purchase for their children (although a few items like calculators in the Upper School need to be purchased separately by parents).

We suggest that parents make payments by automatic payment or internet banking; please identify these on the bank statement by putting your family number in the reference (see School Address List, last column).

The account number for Lower and Upper School standard disbursements is:  
Westpac 03-0531-0432785-004

The account number for the Kindergarten standard disbursements is:  
Westpac 03-0531-0379910-014

The School applies disbursement donations towards the costs of items supplied to students including main lesson books, drawing paper, exercise books, coloured pencils for school use in Classes 1–8, crayons for school use in Class 1–8 and Kindergarten, wet strength cartridge paper, geometry sets at Class Six level, flour, raisins, etc for Kindergarten morning teas, use of eurythmy shoes, use of pentatonic flutes, Swedish paper, therapy paper, Yearbook. The items may vary from year to year depending on our teachers' requirements.

The following items are **not** included in the Standard Disbursement and need to be purchased or paid for separately:

- class camps
- extra-curricular sports subs
- Steiner certificate and examination fees (if applicable)
- postage for the Bush Telegraph, if mailed
- fountain pens and other 'individual' or 'preference' items
- whatever is needed for the Class 12 project
- Student Identification Card – Class Seven and Upper School Students
- sports afternoon fees (if applicable)
- items already issued once, but lost or damaged (either intentionally or through careless use)
- for Upper School students: a scientific calculator
- foreign language dictionaries for Upper School students
- recorders



## Fundraising

Like many schools, we run on a tight budget – there is always more we would like to offer but can't. The school holds a number of fundraising activities during the year and classes also raise funds for class trips and camps.

If you have suggestions on how we can raise funds for particular programmes or equipment or if you want to be involved in fundraising, please contact the Principal.

Class Six runs a café after school on Fridays any time from 2:30pm at the bottom of the driveway. The funds raised go towards the cost of their skiing trip in Class Seven the following year. This fundraiser also has an educational component for the class.

## The Toy Craft and Food Fair

Every year parents organise the famous Raphael House Toy Craft and Food Fair to raise funds for the school. The fair is also an opportunity to showcase our school to the public. It is important for parents to get involved in this event to make it a success. Each class has a specific responsibility, the class representatives will contact you about how you can assist.

### 3. Extra-curricular activities

#### Sports

A number of extra-curricular sports activities are offered through the School for students of Class Five upwards (with Touch Rugby available for Class Four in the last term of the School year). These sports are coached, refereed and managed by the parents of the students who participate, as well as by some of the older students. Without this contribution, the School would not be able to offer these sporting activities. Please consider volunteering to help.

The School has a part-time Sports Coordinator who organises our school's extra curricula sports teams. The Sports Coordinator liaises with players and team managers to enhance our school's sport and physical recreation programme by working closely with our students and the parent community.

Other assistance provided by the Sports Coordinator includes organising team registrations and uniform, publicising sporting fixtures and celebrating results in newsletters and on the website, through assemblies and at award evenings.

The Sports Coordinator is based in the Office and can be contacted via email at [sportscoordinator@raphaelhouse.school.nz](mailto:sportscoordinator@raphaelhouse.school.nz)

#### Music

To further strengthen Music at Raphael House we offer individual and small group music lessons to students as part of an itinerant programme. Features of the programme are:

- Individual or group lessons (for up to 4 students) depending on instrument and age and stage of student
- Lessons are 30 minutes long and available to students in Class Three to Class 12
- Lessons take place both in and out of school hours, including in lunchtimes
- Students come out of their regular lessons only as agreed appropriate by teachers
- Lessons for Upper School students will be rotated to avoid impacting on the same subject each week
- Individual \$25/lesson, Group \$15/lesson irrespective of the instrument

Any questions about this programme to [megan.m@raphaelhouse.school.nz](mailto:megan.m@raphaelhouse.school.nz)



## 4. Support from home

### Technology in the Home

As noted in section A, television and computer use is considered detrimental to the development and aims of Waldorf Education, especially in the Kindergarten and Lower School years. Please support this by encouraging your children to be engaged in active play; delaying television, computer and electronics use by your children for as long as possible; and monitoring and rationing use when they are introduced. Parental support and understanding of these issues strengthens the partnership between home and school and benefits the development and education of the children. In the educational context of a Steiner/Waldorf School the appropriate developmental time for acquiring computer literacy is seen to be the high school years. At this time the faculty for critical judgement enables students to make discriminating choices and have a healthy relationship with electronic media. Some helpful references from our parent library include: *"The Plug-In Drug"* by Marie Winn, *"Who's Bringing Them Up"* by Martin Large, and *"Remotely Controlled"* by Dr Aric Sigman.

### Lunch boxes

Lunch boxes should have foods with a high nutritional value and be free of colouring and additives. Please do not send "party" food such as potato chips, sweets, soft drinks or energy drinks to school. Please see our Food and Nutrition Policy, which you can access from the School website.

Some children in our school have extreme allergies to certain foods that cause them to go into anaphylactic shock. A teacher will inform you if this is the case in any of your children's classrooms. This may mean that some food items such as nuts need to be left out of lunchboxes. At present the Kindergarten is a nut-free zone.

### End of term cleaning

Parents are rostered to come in once a year and help clean and prepare the classroom for the next term. Each family in a class is expected to help at least once a year. Cleaning the classroom offers parents an opportunity to care for the place where the children are every day, to see and feel the environment that the class teacher creates (outside of the context of a formal meeting) and to strengthen the social connection of the class. In being willing to bring dutiful service to the school rooms we continue to imbue the unique confluence of consciousness that is the 'Special Character' of Raphael House Rudolf Steiner School. Teachers will tell you that there is a very special energy in a classroom that has been "spring" cleaned with parental energy.

*"May soul be living in this School*

*May this soul be permeated by the Spirit*

*Who shall seek in the foundation*

*Firm will.*

*That in it may grow*

*The sense of goodness*

*In all the building's rooms*

*And that from above*

*There may unite*

*The blessing of the Spirit*

*And the grace of God*

*In all who dwell therein."*

*Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925)*



The school cleaning manager and the Class Parent Representatives liaise to set the date for classroom cleaning and the School provides cleaning equipment and supplies. In general, the school's employed cleaner will conclude particular tasks (high work, carpet stains, etc.) before the Parent Cleaning day. A detailed schedule of the cleaning needs of each room is provided on the day and can be requested from the Class Representative earlier if needed.

The smooth running of the classroom cleaning is an important part of the support that we offer the class teachers. We respectfully request that parents carry the awareness that our response to the spirit of this 'housework' may flow into our children and bring a mindfulness and reverence for our school.

## 5. School groups and activities you can be involved in

### Adult Education Group

As noted in section A, an important part of our Special Character is the School/parent partnership and parents having an understanding of, and commitment to the education we offer. Adult Education enriches the life of the School by giving the parent body and wider community the opportunity to gain knowledge about the philosophical and cultural life at Raphael House Rudolf Steiner School.

The Adult Education Group organises lectures and workshop mainly during terms 2 and 3, covering a wide variety of subjects. Its aim is to provide the parent community with an understanding of Rudolf Steiner education and its philosophy as well as an opportunity to participate in artistic and cultural activities. Adult Education is open to the wider community and sometimes invites guest speakers from within the wider Wellington region.

The key responsibilities of the Adult Education Group are to:

- uphold the Special Character of the School
- design a programme of learning and activities that reflect the School's Special Character, offer a wide variety of courses, workshops, lectures and study groups as well as community building courses
- maintain and keep the Parent Library relevant
- deal with all administrative aspects of providing the Adult Education programme
- make regular contributions to the Bush Telegraph
- report to the College/Principal, the faculty, the Trust.

For more information on the Adult Education Group see the School website or you can contact the group at [adulthoodeducation@raphaelhouse.school.nz](mailto:adulthoodeducation@raphaelhouse.school.nz).

## Parents, Teachers, and Friends Association (PTFA)

The Raphael House Parents, Teachers and Friends Association (**PTFA**) exists to support the school community in our shared endeavour to enhance the unity of the community and the School. The PTFA has an elected committee that works on behalf of its members in several ways such as:

- Representation, support and advocacy towards positive outcomes
- Social events and fundraising
- New initiatives that enhance the school and community.

Meetings are usually held on a monthly basis, with times, dates and venue listed in the Year Planner and the Bush Telegraph. All parents and teachers are very welcome to come along to observe or with questions for discussion. Please could you inform any one of the committee members in advance if you would like to share something at the meeting.

Minutes of committee meetings and other information are available in a folder in the Parent Library, located in the Office. Information and contact details about who is on the committee are available on the school website or you can contact the PTFA by email at [ptfacommittee@gmail.com](mailto:ptfacommittee@gmail.com).

## Te Rōpū Tautoko i te Kaupapa Māori – Māori Support group

Te Rōpū is a group of parents, and staff, mandated by the School Board of Trustees, who want to support the development of Kaupapa Māori within the school. We see our role as:

- Bringing together the wisdom shared between anthroposophy and tikanga Māori, on a spiritual as well as a practical level, for our children's education
- Guarding tikanga Māori within our school community
- Facilitating the journey of kaupapa Māori at Raphael House
- Providing energy and coordinating efforts – practical support
- Seeking and advising on opportunities for teachers and the community
- Taking positive action.

Te Rōpū can be contacted at [Te.Ropu@raphaelhouse.school.nz](mailto:Te.Ropu@raphaelhouse.school.nz).



## Other Groups

There are many other parent groups that you can be a part of including a weekly woodwork group in the evening; a school gardening group, which meets on Friday mornings; and a Parent Craft Group, which meets on Monday mornings in the Handwork Room. Contact details for these groups can be found on the School website or by contacting the Office.



### Parent Cafe

The Parents, Teachers and Friends Association (**PTFA**) runs the Evolutionary Café at the bottom of the driveway on Friday afternoons at school pick up time. The cafe offers a selection of fair trade, organic teas and coffee (for adults).

There is usually a class six fundraising group operating a yummy cake stall alongside with a variety of treats for everyone.

It is a great opportunity to get to know others outside your children's School or Kindergarten groups.

### Parent Library

The Parent Library is located next to the Office. The Parent Library has books on a wide range of subjects including Rudolf Steiner, General Anthroposophy, Education, Parenting, Crafts, Festivals, Songs, Media and Sustainability.

The opening hours are Monday to Friday 8:15–9:30 am. These hours change from time to time, and are listed on the door of the Library. Books can be returned outside these hours in the "Book Returns" box in the Office.

A catalogue of books held in the Parent Library can be viewed on the school website or in the Parent Library. The librarian of the Parent Library can be contacted by emailing [parentslibrary@raphaelhouse.school.nz](mailto:parentslibrary@raphaelhouse.school.nz)





# Section D - Communications and maintaining relationships

## 1. Communications

At Raphael House, we see great value in creating, maintaining and strengthening relationships between the students, their whānau, the community and the School. It's part of our Special Character to keep everyone involved and included in the teachings and the learnings across our community.

### Class Meetings

All the parents of each class meet with their children's teacher once a term, usually on a weeknight evening. Dates and times of class meetings are listed in the Year Planner, on the School website and in the Bush Telegraph.

It is an expectation that all families in a class will be represented at each Parent Evening. If you are unable to attend, please send your apologies and make sure that you catch up on the meeting content from another parent.

These evenings are important for teacher-parent communication, keeping up-to-date with curriculum development, being informed as to what is happening in the class and what is planned. They also help to build a class community and allow parents and families to meet, ask questions and share ideas. The strength, support and interest of a parent body around a class enhance the learning environment for both children and teacher.

### Home visits

Class teachers of children in the Kindergarten and in Class One carry out a home visit to each child's home. Home visits help build the relationship between the family and the teacher and are an opportunity for families and teachers to identify strengths, and build holistic support that is suited to the characteristic and spirit of the child. Every child's spirit and gift is special and unique, and a visit to the home helps children to share this in their own space.

You may choose to discuss a suitable time for home visit with your teacher, or wait to be approached by the teacher. These are friendly, and relaxed visits, made on days and times agreed by the family and teacher.



### Parent teacher interviews

There is a clear expectation that one or both parents will attend the official parent-teacher interviews in Upper School, Lower School and Kindergarten. If you are unable to attend during the scheduled evening, you are asked to arrange an alternative time with your child's teacher/s.

Parent teacher interviews are face-to-face meetings where the teacher speaks specifically about the progress, development and story of your child. Interviews are held at least once a year and provide an opportunity for families to understand the individual gifts and characteristics your child brings to class. Both the teacher and the family are also able to address any ideas or concerns during this session. An appointment schedule will be provided for families to choose a suitable day and time.



## School reports

Reports are sent to parents twice a year for children in the Lower School and at least twice a year for students in the Upper School. Parents are always welcome to arrange a meeting time with class teachers or sponsors where they have any questions or concerns about their child.

## Class parent representatives

Each class has one or more representatives (usually two – one female and one male), who act as “class reps”. Class Reps are chosen annually in consultation with the teacher, usually at the end of each year. The teacher may wish to have the same rep(s) as in the previous year.

Class reps help the class teacher to organise camps, cleaning bees and other things when required; act as a liaison between parents and teacher in general issues relating to the class; and help to create a sense of “class community”.

Class reps can meet weekly, or whenever necessary, with the class teacher. Class reps of all classes meet together with the Principal at scheduled meetings during the year.

## Txtstream

Txtstream is the School cell phone message system. If you have supplied us with your cell phone number, you may receive a text message from the School to notify you of events and absences.

## Communicating more general information and updates

Raphael House has a range of avenues through which information and updates about our School, class activities and community can be shared. These allow us to keep connected with each other, our children and our School and Kindergarten.

- A **year planner** for the following year is sent home at the end of term 4, with School Reports. New families will also receive a year planner by the start of the School year.
- The **Bush Telegraph** is the School newsletter that is emailed to families and is accessible on the website. It keeps families informed of the day-to-day events, meetings and up-to-date information regarding the School and Kindergarten. There are often notices from associated groups such as PTFA, Adult Education, Te Ropu, the Parent Craft Group, and the Gardening group. The Bush Telegraph is also used to publish public notices by the School community. A hard copy is available on request.
- **Emails** from the School and the teachers or class representatives are used frequently to share general School- and class-related information.
- At the end of the year, the School offers a **yearbook** that shares and illustrates the successes of the students’ year. It is a wonderful publication and is full of beautiful artwork, stories and photos shared by students in each class from the Kindergarten to the Upper School.

- **Pass the Blue Diamond** is a blog that shares stories and contributions from the rich life of Raphael House. You will find the link to the blog at the end of the Bush Telegraph, or on <http://passthebluediamond.blogspot.co.nz/>.
- **Formal letters** are posted infrequently to communicate significant messages where appropriate.

## 2. Respecting others' privacy

### Contact lists

You will have been (or will be) asked to provide a suitable email address for school and class communication.

The class email list is a communication tool used predominantly by the Class representative, to inform the class families of activities and information regarding the children, the class, Kindergarten or School.

A school community contact list including contact details for staff and all families is included at the end of this handbook. This has been provided to you on the condition that it is confidential to the School community and to be used only for School purposes. Note that all or parts of the information provided may be used by the School doctor and public health services or other official services as specified by law.

School contact lists are not to be used for sales or advertising, or for the expression of personal views or belief systems.

Please report misuse of this information to the School's Privacy Officer (Judie Fishenden). Please refer to the School's Privacy Policy, available through the School website, for more information.

### Change of contact details

If any of your contact details change, please let the Office and your class know as soon as possible. Updated copies of class contact lists are distributed when necessary.

## 3. Concerns and complaints

If you have any concerns or complaints, please follow the School Complaints Policy, available through the School website. Most complaints can be resolved informally by discussion with the people concerned.

Please do not use email to discuss an issue or problem – in particular, please do not use class email lists to 'discuss' concerns. We would appreciate all families respecting the privacy of others.

# Section E - General Information

## 1. School Policies and Procedures

A list of the School's policies and procedures and links to Policies themselves can be viewed from the School's website [www.raphaelhouse.school.nz](http://www.raphaelhouse.school.nz), and can also be accessed in the Policy Folder in the School Office.

## 2. Transport

### Visitors to the School

If you are visiting the School during School hours please ensure that you SIGN IN at the Office when you enter the School and SIGN OUT when you leave the School grounds; this is a Health and safety requirement..

### School buses

It is the responsibility of parents/caregivers to get their children safely to school. However:

- The Ministry of Education will provide financial assistance in certain cases
- The School provides support by ensuring that students get safely onto buses after school and with behaviour management.

Raphael House is fortunate to have parent-organised school buses that transport children to our School from different areas around the Wellington Region. Information on the School Buses can be found on the Website or by emailing [rh.parentbusgroup@gmail.com](mailto:rh.parentbusgroup@gmail.com).

For children who travel on the bus there are guidelines for bus behaviour (available on our website and in the Office).

### Walking and cycling to School

We agree with the Land Transport Safety Authority's recommendation for cycling to School, which is that children from Class Four and up may bike on their own. A bike rack is beside the Office building.

We suggest that younger children do not walk or bike alone. Bikes are not to be ridden on School grounds.

### Vehicles

Parents are not to use the driveway during school times, unless absolutely necessary (eg to collect a sick child, deliver an immobile one, or deliver heavy or bulky items to school). Please ensure that if you do need to drive in School grounds you drive slowly and are careful to check for children before reversing.

You are welcome to drive up the driveway when you are attending evening or weekend meetings or performances.

Senior Students must have written permission to bring their vehicles to school from the Principal or Deputy Principal.

### Parking

To ensure the safety of our students, please drop off/pick up your child away from the school gate; it gets really congested, especially at the start and end of the school day. Please do not park on the yellow lines. Your co-operation with this is appreciated as the safety of your child is paramount to us.