

Woodside School and Community Resource Center, Inc.
34 Southers Marsh Lane
Plymouth, MA 02360
(508) 830-3384 (508) 332-0262 Cell
FAX (508) 830-0989

Parent Handbook 2023-2024

Welcome to Woodside School and Community Resource Center.

This handbook and the health care policy contain information that parents and caregivers need to know about Woodside policies and procedures to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children enrolled in the school.

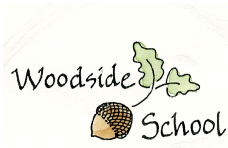
It is important to keep these resources available for reference throughout the year.

Woodside Philosophy and Goals

Woodside School and Community Resource Center, Inc. is a nonprofit 501(c) (3) education organization. It welcomes diversity and does not discriminate on the basis of color, race, national and ethnic origin, cultural heritage, religious or political beliefs, sexual orientation or marital status, or disability, in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship programs, other school administered programs, and in employment practices. Toilet learning status is not an eligibility requirement for children to be enrolled.

Woodside was created as an interactive learning environment for young children to develop understanding of the larger meaning of life and the importance of stewardship. Goals emphasize respecting children's learning through interaction with other children, adults, and the environment; empowering families to meet the needs of their children; creating ongoing support systems within the community; and strengthening the community's ability to best serve families.

Programs at Woodside School are based upon developmentally appropriate practices as described by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the MA Department of Education Standards, to provide for all areas of a child's development: cognitive, emotional, social, and physical, through a child-directed, active, play-based, and integrated approach. Programs also draw from current literature, research, and models such as Reggio Emilia, Montessori, Waldorf, and Highscope, that focus on early childhood education, child development, and family systems.



The learning environment is organized by teachers to provide key experiences to support young children's learning through a curriculum based on interactive, process-focused activities involving: initiative, social relations, creative arts, literacy and language arts, music and movement, math and manipulatives, science exploration and discovery, sand and water play, building, creative play, nature, outdoor exploration, and large motor play.

Transportation Plan for safe arrival and dismissal:

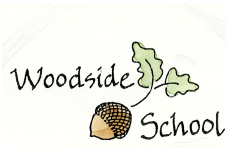
Parents are responsible for providing safe transportation of their children to and from school by complying with the 2008 **Massachusetts Child Passenger Law** requiring children to be secured in a car seat/booster seat until the age of 8 or 57 inches tall, with a seat belt in the back seat.

Arrival: *Drivers should plan to arrive within the first 15 minutes of the session. A drop off before a session begins requires a brightwheel message to alert teachers.*

- Drivers should enter Southers Marsh Lane from Federal Furnace Road, bear right to the Woodside entrance, and park in the school upper or lower parking areas.
- Handicapped Parking is available by the front entrance for children or adults with disabilities. *Families who need assistance or have infants may use these parking spots.*
- Drivers must turn off car engines and remove ignition keys. All children, including siblings, must be brought out of the car, or be within sight of the parent/driver/designated adult.
- Drivers must escort children by holding hands through the parking lot, to the designated drop off area.
- Drivers must check in with the brightwheel app at the designated drop off area. Children must be supervised by the driver until allowed through the gate or school door by a teacher.
- After saying good-bye, drivers should slowly exit the parking area to the left (if facing the school) using the center road, with regard to the safety of walking children and families.

Dismissal: *Drivers should arrive promptly, 5-10 minutes before dismissal time. If the driver is delayed, a brightwheel message is required to alert teachers and to inform children.*

- Drivers should enter the parking lot from the right and park their car as described previously.
- Drivers must turn off car engines and remove the ignition keys. All children, including siblings, must be brought out of the car, or be within sight of the driver.
- Drivers must check out using the brightwheel app at the designated pickup area to confirm dismissal of the child.



- If someone other than the parent will be picking up, there must be written permission on the Child Release Consent Form, which can be updated as needed. Staff should be notified if the driver is someone different than the regular driver.
- Children will be dismissed from the outdoor play area and should exit through the outside gate unless teachers designate that they will be dismissed from inside.
- Drivers must escort all children by holding hands from the dismissal area through the parking lot safely to the car.
- Drivers must abide by the 2008 Massachusetts Child Passenger Safety Law as stated by properly securing each child using a car seat/booster seat with a seat belt.
- Drivers must slowly exit the parking area to the left as previously described, with regard for the safety of walking children and families.
- Drivers are responsible for supervision of all children in their care.

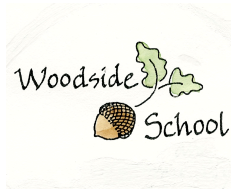
Outdoor Classroom Policies

The outdoor classroom is an extension of the Woodside learning environment. Children are expected to respect the outdoor area, to use and store materials and outdoor equipment appropriately, and to honor safety rules. Children are allowed to use the monkey bars only during class time under supervision of a teacher. During dismissal, the monkey bars will be closed.

Field Trips with Transportation There will be only walking field trips.

Clothing

Children should wear comfortable play clothes and have clothing options for changes in weather and for daily outdoor play. ***Sturdy shoes, rain boots, snow boots, and weather appropriate outerwear with layering options, with hoods or hats, are necessary for children to participate comfortably in all activities.*** We strongly encourage closed-toe shoes. Extra clothing should be brought to school in a labeled backpack or tote bag and should include underwear, socks, shirts, and pants. Snow pants, boots, hats and mittens are necessary on cold days even when there is no snow. Clothing labeled with the child's name helps to avoid loss or confusion.



School Cancellation Policy

If Plymouth Public Schools are closed due to inclement weather, Woodside will also be closed. If Plymouth Public Schools have a delayed start, Woodside morning classes will be canceled. Delayed start time for full day students will be at 11:00 AM unless otherwise designated.

Woodside School closures will also be **sent as an alert directly to families through the brightwheel app**. The brightwheel app will be used to facilitate communication between the school and families, to cancel classes if necessary while children are in session, to share information, and/or to alert families in emergencies. A designated cell phone (508-332-0262) is maintained for use when the regular phone is not in service and/or to receive/send texts.

When to Keep Your Child at Home

It is necessary for parents to keep children at home when they feel ill, and/or have a fever or have symptoms of a contagious disease, exhibit symptoms/ test positive for Covid-19, or have had direct exposure to Covid-19. This is to protect other children, their families, and the Woodside staff from being exposed unnecessarily to infectious illnesses. See our Health Care Policy for more details.

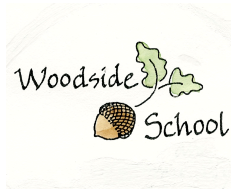
See the Health Care Policy for additional information regarding COVID-19 protocols.

Parents must notify Woodside via the brightwheel app to inform the Director and/or Staff of absences. If a student or family member has been exposed to/tests positive for Covid-19, the school must be alerted.

Health Related Dismissal

If a child becomes ill at school, the Director will provide a quiet area for the child to rest away from the other children, and will provide food, drink, play materials, a soft blanket, and a cot or a chair, as desired or if needed. The parent, or if the parent is unreachable, an authorized alternate caregiver, will be called to pick up an ill child as soon as possible before regular dismissal. All teachers are trained in emergency First Aid/CPR procedures.

In a severe emergency, EMS Rescue Assistance (911) will be called first and then the parent/alternate. If necessary, after assessment, for further evaluation or for safety, the child may be transported to the hospital.



Health Care Policy FAQs

The full Health Care Policy has been shared digitally to each individual family upon enrollment and is posted in the office and in the Resource Room for reference.

The staff will notify parents in person, or by phone, email, or brightwheel messaging when a communicable disease has been introduced into the school.

Parents of children with medical, health, and/or other special needs or who may require medication during school hours, or who may require a specific plan for accommodation as needs are identified, must meet with the Director to discuss Woodside policies and procedures, and to develop an Individualized Health Care Plan. This plan must be authorized by a physician before the child may attend class.

Snacks/Food Allergies

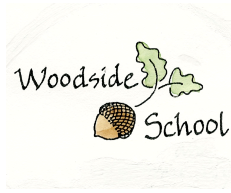
Woodside provides a mid-morning and afternoon snack of water, and/or fruit juice, fruit or vegetables, and/or crackers, and/or one of the children's cooking projects. Snacks are planned on a weekly basis. A snack calendar is posted in the kitchen.

Please Note: We have established Woodside as a peanut and nut free environment due to the highly allergic and life-threatening reaction of some children to nut proteins. We ask that all peanut and nut products be kept at home to provide a safe school environment for those children who would be at serious risk if exposed to such allergens. It is important to be aware that many processed food products and most candies may contain or could be contaminated by traces of food allergens.

Unless the Teachers and/or the Directors have been previously notified and have given specific permission, no additional food should be brought to school.

Lunch Policy and Procedures

To support families with scheduling and/or other needs, a lunch option is offered for children, Monday through Friday after the morning session until 1:00. Advance registration through a brightwheel message is requested so teachers can plan for appropriate supervision and learning activities. The cost is \$15.00 per hour/per child, billed at the end of each month. Parents provide a nutritional, peanut/nut-free lunch, which will be stored in the child's backpack in the classroom. Please include an ice pack for optimum food safety.



As recommended by the USDA Child and Adult Care Program, a nutritional lunch includes the following: meat or protein, a serving of fruit and/or vegetable, bread or complex carbohydrate, and milk, juice, or water.

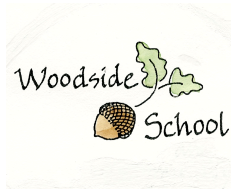
We ask that parents check lunch choices carefully to avoid sending any peanut or nut products to school. Please read all labels of processed/prepackaged foods (granola bars, etc.) to determine whether the food product is peanut and nut-free and not contaminated during the manufacturing process. *Please let the teachers know, and/or label appropriately, if soy nut or sunflower butter is substituted for peanut or other nut butters, as it is difficult to distinguish the difference. Food will be returned home unless it is known to be free from peanuts/nuts.* As an added precaution, children are not permitted to share food at school. We ask that all adults develop awareness and understanding, show consideration, and support in providing a safe environment for children with life-threatening allergies.

Tuition/Extended Hours

Annual tuition is divided into *10 equal payments, the first due as a deposit confirming the enrollment agreement*, and the remaining 9 installments *paid at the beginning of each month, until final payment is received*. Payments may be made via credit card through the brightwheel app or by check paid to Woodside School or by cash.

Parents are expected to inform and update the Director when financial support is needed so alternate plans may be created. A flexible payment schedule throughout a 12-month period may be created for budgeting needs if a family experiences hardship or an unexpected financial challenge because of illness or disability or the loss of a job. Ongoing, late, or missed payments impact Woodside's fiscal responsibilities and viability. The best interests of the child and family are considered, yet further action, including termination, may be taken if necessary.

To help with family schedules and needs, *extended hours until 4:00 are available for an additional fee of \$15.00 an hour*. Advance registration is required to plan for staffing and learning activities. *Extended hours are billed at the end of each month.*



Family Involvement

Woodside's mission focuses on providing support for families to strengthen connections between parents, children, and teachers. We work to use these connections to build a vibrant and supportive community that can offer support and resources to others.

All adults in the Woodside community are expected to work cooperatively to maintain a safe and respectful environment for each other and for all children.

Family involvement is an integral part of Woodside programming. There are many ways for families to support Woodside: donation of supplies, help with the gardens, cleaning and maintenance, donation of loose parts or equipment to enhance our curriculum, or help with fundraising/ grant writing. We appreciate all contributions of resources, time, and talents.

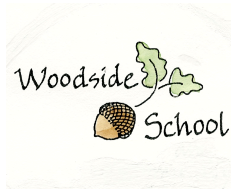
Communication **brightwheel**

Teachers will communicate with parents about their children on a regular basis throughout the year. Arrival and dismissal procedures are designed to facilitate this by offering opportunities for a quick check-in or request for a longer conversation. The primary method of communication beyond face-to-face interaction is through the brightwheel app. where photos and notes from the day will be shared. E-mail or phone calls will be used as needed and when requested. Parents are welcome to visit, unannounced, whenever their child is in class.

Please note: parents and caregivers must honor EEC/CDC Guidelines when visiting the school.

With parental permission, photos of the children in their learning environment will be shared with families via the brightwheel app. With parental permission, individual and group photos may be used on social media sites to promote Woodside School. Children will not be identified or tagged.

Parents and teachers are encouraged to share information on a regular, ongoing basis to create continuity of care. ***Teachers and the Woodside Directors are always reachable by messaging through brightwheel and welcome all questions and concerns from families.*** If more information, time, or additional resources are needed or requested, a meeting can be arranged with the teachers and/or Directors, to develop plans and support.



As a learning community, Woodside acknowledges and welcomes the expertise, skills, and ideas of families. Parents are encouraged to attend Board Meetings and to participate in committee work. The Board of Directors includes a voting parent representative. In addition, the annual evaluation of our programming offers the opportunity for parents to have input when creating future plans.

Information for parents is posted on the brightwheel app, the Woodside Facebook page, Instagram, and on the Woodside Website: woodsidesrc.org. School policies, philosophies and curriculum, parenting information and handouts, and news of local programs and activities are made available. Parents are appreciated as additional resources and are encouraged to share pertinent information with Teachers and the Directors so that it can be further communicated to other families.

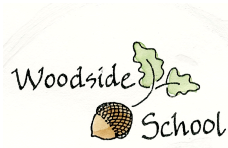
Woodside Library/Resources/Parenting Discussion Groups

Woodside has an extensive collection of books, publications, and written handouts on child development, parenting, and topics of interest for parents with children of all ages. They may be borrowed from the Resource Room if they are signed out and returned in a timely manner to ensure availability. If parents would like information about a specific topic, Teachers and the Directors can provide additional resources. Woodside's Facebook page shares informational links concerning child development, parenting, and educational resources.

Parenting Discussion Groups, facilitated by Nancy Stearns, a Certified Parenting Educator, and Laura Flynn, Early Intervention Specialist, meet regularly, typically each month, to offer further information and support. Parents are encouraged to contact the Teachers or Directors if more information would be helpful for any parenting situation.

Behavior Management Plan

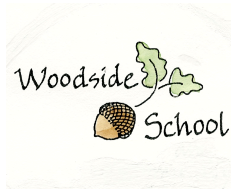
Teachers at Woodside maintain a safe, orderly learning environment where children feel encouraged to explore opportunities that foster their growth and development. A general, proactive plan, based on positive guidance, has been created to help children learn how to manage daily challenges and life events. It describes appropriate behavior for school, using clear expectations and developmentally appropriate, consistent limits to support children to feel safe physically and emotionally. The goal is to develop self-control through understanding, problem-solving, conflict resolution, and accountability. It helps children develop respect for themselves and others, as well as for the bigger world. Children will participate in the establishment of such expectations,



limits, and procedures through individual or group discussion as specific situations occur and, when appropriate and feasible, use these to help develop the classroom community and culture. Teachers will encourage and acknowledge appropriate, respectful, and helpful behaviors that children demonstrate, in a regular, ongoing fashion.

If a child's behavior becomes unsafe, inappropriate, or disruptive, the following procedure will be followed:

1. The teacher will interrupt the child's activity/interaction and speak with the child respectfully to develop understanding of the situation, identify underlying issues, and to clarify what is appropriate.
2. Through discussion with the child, the teacher will help the child develop a specific plan of action to resolve the issue and support responsible behavior, which will be agreed upon by all involved.
3. The child will then be allowed to resume the activity/interaction and will be encouraged to demonstrate understanding of the expectation, with supervision and guidance from the teacher.
4. The teacher will continue to help the child follow through with the plan, by supporting appropriate actions, by contributing suggestions or cues, by redirecting behaviors, and/or by modeling positive responses. If the child continues to have difficulty regulating emotions, fulfilling expectations, and/or maintaining safe behavior despite support and guidance, the child will be redirected to another activity and/or space, with continued adult supervision.
5. When the child shows interest to resume the activity/interaction at another time, the expectations will be reiterated, and the action plan revisited. The discussion will focus on developing awareness and understanding of appropriate behavior as agreed upon previously. Teachers will help the child fulfill the expectations through positive encouragement and acknowledgement of the child's efforts, and with support when needed.
6. If a child injures another, the injured child will be cared for and comforted. The children will then be guided through the above procedure, with additional focus on learning safer alternatives to resolving problems.
7. Children are encouraged to see cause/effect, how their decisions or actions impact others, and how to make amends or correct an action independently of adult intervention when it is safe to do so. Therefore, at times teachers will observe and be available to intervene, yet let children experience frustration or other feelings in order to gain experience with conflict resolution more independently, to learn to self-regulate, and to develop communication skills.



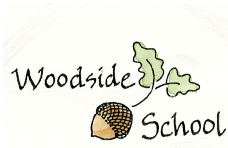
The following practices are strictly prohibited and will not be used: spanking or other corporal punishment of children; subjecting children to punishment, humiliation, neglect, verbal or physical abuse; depriving a child of outdoor time, meals or snacks, force feeding or in any way using food as a form of discipline; punishing a child for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet; confining a child to a piece of equipment for an extended period of time in lieu of supervision; using “time out” as a consequence. Rewards or other manipulative responses will not be used.

The Director is available to assist the teachers in any situation, and to help create proactive discipline plans. A conference with the child’s parents, teachers, and/or the Director may be arranged to further acknowledge issues and concerns, offer information and resources, and to collaboratively formulate a proactive plan in the best interest of the child. Follow-up discussions to offer support and information will be provided as needed.

Assessment of Child's Progress/Conferences

Ongoing assessment is an integral part of the Woodside program to support children’s learning by identifying strengths, interests, and needs. Teachers use the information to make decisions about teaching practices and to create learning environments, develop curriculum goals, and to communicate and collaborate with families. Ongoing observations of children take place in the classroom and in the outdoor learning environments to obtain information on health, learning styles, and on all areas of development: cognitive, language, social-emotional, physical, and self-help/life skills. Teachers show the process and progress of the children’s development and learning through samples of work and photo displays. Photos of the children’s interactions are also shared with families through the brightwheel app.

Teachers value the importance of using both informal and formal opportunities to exchange information with parents on a regular, ongoing basis through daily contact at arrival and dismissal, messaging via the brightwheel app, newsletters, emails, and phone calls. In addition, Parent/Teacher Conferences are held at least twice a year, in the fall and spring, to discuss each child’s growth and development. Teachers are trained to use a variety of assessment tools and prepare a written summary of observations guided by developmental checklists, learning objectives, and assessment criteria, which is the basis of the discussion. A copy of each conference form is given to the parents and kept on file. Parents with children who are identified with special needs



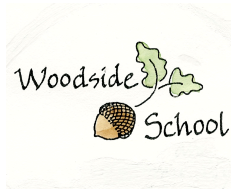
and who are receiving services will be given a written report assessing the child's progress every three months.

Referral Services Policy

At times a child enrolled in the program may benefit from an evaluation from an outside service. This may be in the areas of speech, language, cognitive development, gross and fine motor development, social/emotional development, and/or sensory regulation. Referral may also be necessary for an evaluation concerning dental health, sight and/or hearing.

When there is a concern and/or a need identified, the teacher will inform the Director. The teacher and the Director will review the child's file. The Director will observe the child in the classroom setting, using the "Trans-Disciplinary Play-Based Assessment" ("TPBA") by Linder as a guide and/or other assessments. The teacher and the Director will meet to evaluate their observations and formulate a plan to accommodate the child's needs. The Director will document the observations as well as any recommendations for further action. A conference will be set up by the Director with the parents to discuss the information and to make recommendations. The "Ages and Stages Questionnaire", used by teachers for individual children, also may be made available to parents, which is designed to be used by parents at home, with instructions for scoring. If it is determined that a referral would be helpful, the Director will inform the parents in writing of the reasons for referral, including a summary of observations and the efforts that have been made to accommodate the child's needs at Woodside. This written record will be maintained in the child's file. The teacher and/or Director will help in making the referral and shall have written parental consent before any referral is made.

Once referred, it will be the responsibility of the Director to serve as liaison, providing information to the parents and the agency. Some families may use the services for testing, or the child can be provided with services during hours when the child is not attending Woodside. With parental permission and input, the referral agency will be requested to provide information and assistance to the Director so that a plan can be created to meet the child's needs while at Woodside. The teacher, in collaboration with the Director, will have responsibility for the implementation of this plan. The Director will provide support for ongoing assessment and planning as needed. The child's progress will be reviewed, and a written report given to parents at least every three months.



Public School Resources

Plymouth: Denise Tobin, Principal of
Plymouth Early Childhood Center (PECC) 508-830-4347
Silver Lake (Kingston, Halifax, Plympton):
Kerri Whipple, Principal Integrated Preschool (SLIP) 781-585-3821

Telephone numbers for other school districts will be provided upon request.

Other Agencies:

Kennedy Donovan Center, Inc. (Early Intervention) 508-747-2012
MA Dept. of Public Health:
Southeast Regional Office, New Bedford 508-984-0600
MA Dental Society, Boston 800-342-8747
MA Medical Society, Physicians 800-322-2303

The Plymouth Family Partnership Resource Book may help families seeking other agencies for assistance. The Director is available to assist families seeking information, resources and community support.

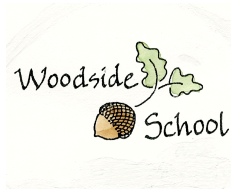
Suspension/Termination Policy

Procedures are followed according to the Woodside Behavior Management and Referral Policies to avoid the suspension/termination of children due to challenging behavior. A conference with parents, teachers, and/or Director is arranged to discuss concerns and issues, to provide information and resources, and to develop a plan for behavioral intervention in the program, including the use of consultation and support staff for classroom teachers. Family support and resources for managing behaviors at home are provided. Referrals are offered for evaluation, diagnostic or therapeutic services.

After implementation of the referral process, it may be determined that a child be asked to withdraw from Woodside School if the health and safety of the child cannot be assured, and/or the child's developmental needs are not being met at the school.

A parent conference will be held with the Director and the circumstances and reasons for withdrawal will be discussed and documented, and a written copy of this conference will be given to parents and placed in the child's file. The circumstances under which a child may return to the program will be decided on an individual basis.

The Director will inform parents of the availability of information and referral for other services through the Community Care for Kids and other agencies.



The teachers will prepare the child for withdrawal in a manner consistent with the child's ability to understand. All adults in the Woodside community are expected to work cooperatively to maintain a safe and respectful environment for each other and all children.

Children's Records

Woodside follows specific procedures, as directed by the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), regarding access, duplication and dissemination of children's records.

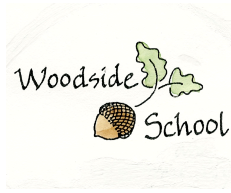
Information contained in a child's record is privileged and confidential. This includes any individual screening or assessment information, which will be used to create individualized educational plans. Woodside School will not distribute or release information in a child's record to anyone not directly related to implementing the program for the child without the written consent of the parent/s or legal guardian. The child's parent/s will have access to the child's record upon request. Such access will not be delayed for more than two business days after the initial request without the consent of the child's parent/s. The Director will maintain a written log in each child's record that identifies anyone who has had access to or has received any information out of the record.

Woodside shall not charge for copies of any information contained in children's records.

Amending the Child's Record:

Parents have the right to add, delete, or amend information, comments, data, or any other relevant materials in their child's record. Such requests must be made in accordance with the procedures as described below:

1. If parents are of the opinion that adding information is not enough to explain, to clarify, or to correct objectionable material in their child's record, they have the right to a conference with the Director to make their objections known.
2. The Director will render a decision in writing within one (1) week after the conference, stating the reason/s for the decision. If the decision is in favor of the parents, steps will be taken immediately to put the decision into effect.



Transfer of Records:

Upon written request, the Director will transfer children's records to the parents or to any other person the parents identify, when children are no longer in care at Woodside.

Policy for Reporting Abuse or Neglect

All staff members are mandated reporters and shall report suspected child abuse or neglect, following the protocols as described:

The staff member will document any concerns and notify the Director or designee. The Director will report suspected abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Families. The Director or designee will notify the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) immediately after filing a 51A report. The Director will notify the parent/s or guardian of the report.

If a 51A is filed naming a staff member, the Director will immediately separate the staff member from the children and will notify the EEC. The staff member will perform tasks unrelated to the care of children until the DCF investigation is completed and for as long as the EEC requires. Refer to the Health Care Policy for further information.

Woodside School and Community Resource Center Organizational Information

Woodside School and CRC is an incorporated 501(c)(3) non-profit organization created for an educational purpose, with a Board of Directors. A list of current members of the Board of Directors and the by-laws are available from the office.

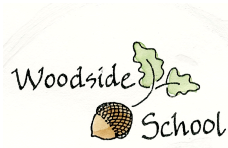
The Administrative organization is as follows:

Nancy Stearns, Director/Teacher
Laura Flynn, Assistant Director/Teacher
Donna Pulselli, Administrative Assistant

Allison Bither, Group 2 Team Teacher
Alyssa Borey, Group 1 Team Teacher
Lisa Dudley, Group 3 Team Teacher
Nicole Gill, Group 3 Team Teacher
Stacey Roberts, Group 2 Team Teacher
Anathea Viscariello, Group 1 Team Teacher
Leighann Westgate, Group 2 Team Teacher
Laura Wagner, Group 1 Team Teacher

Woodside is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization based on a collaborative model. By-laws include the Director/s, a member of the teaching staff, a current parent, and representatives from the community as voting members of the Board of Directors.

Board meetings are held regularly throughout the school year to review, assess, and to develop Woodside programs and policies. Meetings are open to all. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to attend meetings and to join Board Committees.



The Board of Directors is committed to keeping Woodside a viable option for families who value high quality early childhood education and family support programs. Tuition alone does not cover the operating costs. Grant writing and fundraising broaden the base of support, educate the public about the positive effect of quality early childhood education and family support programs, and supplement tuition income to meet specific goals.

The Licensing Authority for Woodside School is the MA Department of Early Education and Care (MA EEC), 100 Myles Standish Blvd. Suite 100, Taunton, MA, 02780. Woodside Licenser is Vanessa Ward: 508-884-6032; vanessa.ward@mass.gov. Parents may contact EEC for information regarding the program's regulatory compliance history.