



August 22, 2019

Welcome to Games Class!

Dear Parents,

As a Waldorf parent myself, I am aware that there is often some confusion about what exactly “Games” class is. Some schools have decided to rename this class “Movement” to better describe the curriculum. Historically, Waldorf schools have chosen not to call their movement education program Gym or PE as a way to underscore the very intentional work of this essential subject class. In *The Study of Man*, Rudolf Steiner said, when we use our limbs, whether it be for useful or useless work we are “always splashing about in the spirit and are connected with the spirit.” When activity is purposeful it connects us with the spirit in a deeper way. “We can guide a child’s external movements towards purposeful movements...so that the child does not splash around in the spirit, but follows the spirit as a goal” (1919, Steiner). The whole Waldorf curriculum is designed to provide the children with the right balance of mental work and physical work in order to bring harmony to the internal and external forces at work on the human being.

The Games/Movement curriculum not only provides a path for healthy development for the individual child, it is also important for the social and emotional health of the class. It is here that children develop important skills in self-control, coordination, and self-responsibility. They take these skills on for themselves and in the context of the group and quickly discover how their individual contribution affects the outcome of the group. Age appropriate games and activities are carefully designed to build specific movement skills, allow children to identify their own strengths and weaknesses, and to explore their social connections within their class. Sports are only introduced when the class is strong enough to support healthy competition.

Grade 1

Impulse and body control. Develop the ability to observe before acting. Body Geography and proprioception. Balance. Tumbling, jump rope, Mother May I, hopscotch, ball handling. Games in a story context.

Grade 2

Eye-hand coordination, aiming. Personal responsibility. Maintain a sense of humor in games with “danger” element. Dissolving and reforming the circle, introduction to line games, jump rope, cooperative games, ball catching, tumbling.

Grade 3

Waking up to individuality, precision and judging. Beginning of games that lead to sports. Kickball, line games (sharks and minnows), tagging games, jump rope “tricks”, non-competitive relays, dance, tumbling.

Grade 4

Foundation of team sports through skill-building games. Individual achievement. Tag games, competitive relays introduced, team goals, ball games, tumbling and basic acrobatics.



Grade 5

Pentathlon (running, javelin, discus, long jump, wrestling) provides competition and objective judgement of the individual: measurable results, quality of movement, evaluation of effort, sportsmanship. Team games, sport skills. Introduction to acrobatic routines. Intermural sports.

Middle School Grades: Introduction of interscholastic sports. BWS competes in soccer: 7/8th boys, 7/8th girls, 6th grade co-ed, basketball, baseball boys and lacrosse girls. Students in grades 6-8 are required to play on one school team per year. Participation in school sports is a great way to improve fitness, build skills in a supportive atmosphere, and build friendships with other students.

Grade 6

Muscle and strength. Rules. Team sports. Blocks on different sports: school sports, life sports. Cross country skiing. Archery. Track and Field. Circus skills. Intermural sports.

Grade 7 and 8

Games and activities from previous years. Outdoor education. More team sports (foundation for high school athletics). Circus skills and bi-annual circus performance. Fitness challenges (obstacles, calisthenics, running). Life sports (dance, volleyball, softball, ultimate frisbee, golf, archery, etc). Game creation. Intermural sports.

Full participation in Games class is important. Please remind your child to dress in clothes they can move freely in. Hair should be tied back. Season appropriate outerwear is essential. We will work outside as much as possible.

Physical activity is extremely important for children. It is our goal to create positive physical experiences that they will take forward through high school and beyond. Games and sports introductions/progressions have been carefully designed to meet all of our students, not just the natural athletes. Life sports units provide children a foundation of activities that they will be able to do throughout their life. If you have a fitness related activity or sport that you would like to share with students please let us know! It could be one class, leading an outing (ex. mountain biking, hiking), leading an intermural club (ex. running, ultimate frisbee), or coaching an interscholastic team. Our example provides the best reinforcement for our children. I am looking forward to working with you and your children this year.

Sincerely,
Ms. S

Sara Greene
Games Teacher/Athletic Director