

Pacífico Internacional

Family Handbook 2026/27



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School Information

School operating hours

Office Hours: Monday - Friday 7:30 am – 2.30 pm

Kindergarten Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00 am -1:00 pm

Aftercare 1:00-2:15 pm

Grade school hours: Monday - Friday 8:00 am - 2:15 pm

Contact details

Physical Address:	300 meters West and 50 meters North from Eco El Sabanero Lodge, Cañafistula, Provincia de Guanacaste
WhatsApp / Phone:	+(506) 8762-6927
E-mail:	info@waldorf.cr
Website	www.waldorf.cr
Instagram	@pacificointernacional
Facebook	Pacífico Internacional - Inspiración Waldorf

<u>Administration</u>	
Head of School	Helene Lafferty Smith: helene@waldorf.cr
Office Coordinator	Andrea Rojo - info@waldorf.cr
Finance questions:	billing@waldorf.cr

<u>Early Childhood</u>		
Class	Lead Teacher	Assistant
Guanacaste Kindergarten	Robyn Mundrick	Larissa Paola Granda
Aromo Kindergarten	Claudia Verónica Barrientos	Hila Fux Carolín Makowski (supporting both groups)
<u>Grades 1-8</u>		
Class	Main Teacher	Extra language teacher
Grade 1	Elvira Espinosa Gil	Katy Thompson
Grade 2 & 3	Katy Thompson	Karol Abarca
Grade 4 & 5	Karol Abarca	Angelique Metta
Grade 6	César Bravo	Angelique Metta Amrita Shore
Grade 7 & 8	Angelique Metta	César Bravo Amrita Shore
Music - Grades 1 - 8	Jesua Moises Esquivel Rodriguez	
Handwork - Grades 1-8	Carrie Lawson	
Movement / Physical Education (PE)	Tyler Calvert-Thompson / César Bravo	
Art and wood work - Grades 1-8	Tyler Calvert-Thompson	
Gardening, Cooking, English support Grades 1-8	Oliver Ramming	

Introduction

The Family Handbook is intended to be a guide to the policies and procedures that support the daily healthy functioning of the school.

Thank you for taking the time to review this handbook at the beginning of the school year. The need may arise to change the guidelines described in the handbook. Pacífico Internacional therefore reserves the right to interpret these guidelines or to change these guidelines. This edition replaces all previously issued editions. Any changes to the handbook will be communicated to the families.

Commitment to Equity, Accessibility, Inclusivity and Diversity

Pacífico Internacional strives for an equitable and accessible educational experience and environment for all. Our community embraces diversity in all its forms, including, but not limited to, differences in ethnicity, cultural and religious heritage, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic background, geographic origin, and family structure. We provide our students with a rich, inclusive curriculum that reflects the world in which we live and fosters a safe atmosphere where every member of the community is respected and multiple viewpoints can be peacefully expressed.

Overview of Waldorf Education

As a Waldorf Inspired School, we offer an educational approach that emphasizes holistic child development, experiential learning, and the integration of arts across all academic disciplines. Waldorf Education has its roots in the spiritual and scientific research of Austrian scientist and philosopher, Rudolf Steiner. According to Steiner, human beings have a threefold nature -- comprised of spirit, soul, and body. Human capacities unfold in three developmental phases on the path to adulthood: Early Childhood, middle childhood, and adolescence. Waldorf Education is designed to meet the needs and capacities of children at each of these phases

Highlights of Waldorf Education

- Students learn through rich thematic units called Main Lesson Blocks in which they are taught developmentally appropriate history, social studies, science, geography, reading, writing and math.
- Students make their own books, called Main Lesson Books, using original writings and artistic, visual representations of their learning.
- All students learn to paint, draw, and do form drawing and handwork.
- All students learn music through singing, flutes and recorder
- Students participate in physical movement classes weekly.
- History and literature are presented through a rich storytelling tradition that inspires imagination and the creation of mental pictures, supporting healthy neurological development and the basis of creative thinking.
- Theatrical arts are an integral part of each student's yearly experience. Plays are produced and performed for parents each year.
- Seasonal festivals and events are celebrated by the community as a "golden thread" that winds its way throughout the year.

Waldorf education in the Grades

Main Lesson Blocks

Each morning, students have a two-hour main lesson block with their class teacher. During this time the class focuses on a core academic subject and the associated skills for 3-4 weeks. This approach allows teachers to cover the curriculum intensively and provides students the fullest possible immersion in a subject so each academic subject receives special focus during the course of the year.

Main Lesson Books and Textbooks

The students themselves write and illustrate self-created textbooks (Main Lesson books) representing the material learned in that thematic unit. The daily Main Lesson includes work in the Main Lesson book. The student writes and illustrates one of these in the course of each block, gaining much practice in handwriting, grammar, art and composition along the way. Creating one's own book, rather than simply reading a textbook, anchors knowledge solidly. The enthusiastic pride children take in creating their books demonstrates a true joy in learning. Teachers and students refer to a variety of books and other resources to research and present the curriculum in an age-appropriate manner.

Homework

Similarly to most Waldorf schools, homework, or classwork assigned outside of the regular school day, is typically not introduced in the early years but rather in the upper grades. This is a deliberate approach, as Waldorf education emphasizes a balanced approach to learning that prioritizes play, exploration, and social interaction for younger children. When homework is assigned, it will have a purpose and meaning. The developmental age of the child and time needed to complete homework are taken into consideration by teachers in assigning homework.

Special Subject Classes

Music

Music is central to Waldorf education because it is believed to be essential for human development, nurturing the whole child – body, soul, and spirit. Through music, students develop a deeper awareness of themselves, both individually and in relation to others. It's not just about learning musical skills; it's about fostering mindfulness, patience, and self-soothing, which are foundational for higher thinking and emotional well-being,

Throughout their years at the school the students experience the joy of singing and making music together. The essential elements for music such as pitch, rhythm, tone, dynamics, form, and tempo are explored using different instruments, songs, and games. Students also learn about music from diverse cultures and regions around the world, and how they contrast and compare with our own.

Handwork

Handwork is crucial in Waldorf schools because it fosters a wide range of cognitive, emotional, and physical development skills, moving beyond mere artistic expression to cultivate a holistic approach to learning. It helps students develop patience, perseverance, and problem-solving

skills while also enhancing fine motor skills and concentration. Additionally, handwork connects students to the process of creation, building self-esteem and a sense of accomplishment.

Handwork supports the child's natural sense of beauty, color, and form and lays the groundwork for other artistic work throughout the grades. It includes knitting, crocheting, weaving, sewing, and cross stitch.

Movement/Physical Education (PE)

Movement is a cornerstone of Waldorf education, not just as physical activity, but as a fundamental tool for learning and development. It's integrated into the curriculum to enhance cognitive, social, emotional, and physical growth. Through movement, students develop coordination, spatial awareness, creativity, and a deeper connection to themselves and the world around them

Research shows a close connection between bodily movement, spatial integration, and brain development. Games and movement classes focus on imaginative games that are developmentally appropriate for each class' age, encouraging teamwork, cooperation, problem solving, and individual successes.

Art / Woodworking

In Waldorf schools, art is considered fundamental to a holistic education, not just an extra subject. It is integrated into the curriculum because it engages the "whole child" - head, heart, and hands - fostering creativity, emotional intelligence, and deeper understanding of academic subjects. The arts are seen as essential for developing a child's imagination, emotional intelligence, and ability to learn and retain information

Field Trips

Field trips are an important part of school life. The faculty plans field trips at the start of each school year to integrate these activities into their curriculum. Sensitivity to the additional cost of field trips is always considered when planning class trips.

In addition, when planning field trips, faculty always remain mindful of the relevance of the trip to the curricular activities of the class and the age of the children.

When planning field trips the school will:

- Assess the number of chaperones that are required based on the age of the children and activity undertaken to ensure adequate supervision. At times the school may ask for parent volunteers.
- Ensure outside organizations providing programming associated with higher risk carry their own liability insurance.
- For overnight trips, a certified first aid attendant accompanies the group.
- Ensure that parents of the children attending are notified of the mode of transportation used to transport students to the field trip.
- In cases of emergency, the Head of School will be contacted immediately.
- Ensure that signed consent forms are completed for all students attending a field trip.

Technology and Media

Media Policy

As part of its developmental approach to education, Waldorf principles emphasize the need for a solid foundation of direct and hands-on experience for younger children. The introduction of technology is postponed to allow for an extended period of kinesthetic, concrete, and somatic learning and direct experience. Screens, electronic media, and digital tools are not generally introduced until the sixth grade

Pacífico Internacional believes that the consumerism, violence, and passive entertainment promoted by mass-media culture do not support the well-being of children. The school is dedicated to nurturing the children's capacities for imagination, healthy emotional development, independent thinking and positive action. Children exposed to the media are not left free to use their own imaginations or talk about their own experiences, instead they have a need to unburden themselves by engaging the other children to either play out the media experience or talk obsessively about it while eating or playing. Faculty and administration will ask children who are full of media to refrain from talking about it at school and we will redirect media imitation play to allow other children to be free from this influence.

In recognizing the harmful effects that media have on the development of these capacities, the Kindergarten and Grades teachers request that parents eliminate media from the lives of their children. It is especially important in a world of constant media bombardment that the young child is protected whenever possible and thus a media free home life is essential. As need be, the teachers will assist by providing recommendations about how to carry this out.

For our purposes, media is considered to include:

- Smart phones
- Smart watches
- Computers
- Tablets (this includes educational programs and eBooks)
- Television
- Movies
- Video and electronic games, including handheld devices

Device free campus

We are a device free campus, students are not allowed to bring cell phones, smart watches or tablets to school. If a student brings such a device, it will be held in the office until the end of the day.

In keeping with the media free environment, we create for the younger children, we ask that parents refrain from using cell phones on campus. If you need to take a call, please step off school grounds to do so. Avoid taking photographs of your children in their classrooms or while engaged in school activities. We encourage both adults and children simply to enjoy the moment at hand. The school will designate someone to take photos or videos of school plays or events that will be shared with families. Please be respectful of our community by taking this seriously. Additional resources of the effects of media on children will be shared during parent education sessions and can also be shared with you upon request.

General information

Attendance

School hours:

Mixed-Age Kindergarten: 8:00 AM – 2:15 PM

Grades: 8:00 AM- 2:15 PM

Drop off between: 7:45 - 7:55 AM

Students in Grades are expected to be in class every day, all day, except in the case of an excused absence, which can include:

- Illness
- Family emergencies
- Religious holidays
- Medical appointments

Regular attendance is essential for student success. Unexcused absences numbering over 5 (five) is excessive and may require a parent conference with teachers or the Head of School.

Parents are asked to notify the teacher or the office before 8:00 AM if a student will be absent or arriving late for a medical reason.

In the event that a student needs to leave School early, parents are asked to notify the school ahead of time and check the student out at the office when they leave.

Punctuality

Early Childhood

It is important for the children to arrive at school on time each day as it is often difficult for children to enter into an activity that is already underway. Many important activities often take place early in the school morning.

Grades

Drop off takes place between 7:45 -7:55 AM. Students are expected to be in their classroom ready to learn by 8:00 AM. Late arrival negatively impacts both the individual student and the class as a whole, and issues of excessive tardiness will be discussed with parents.

Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures

Drop off

Drop off takes place from 7:45-7:55 AM

Parents may either drop their children off at the front of the school where school personnel will be daily from 7:45 AM, or park their car and walk their child to their classroom. Parents are asked to please leave the classrooms by 8:00 AM to allow teachers to start their day with the class.

Pick up

Pick up is at 2:15 PM for both Kindergarten and Grades 1-8.

Pick up takes place at the front gate of the school. If you are going to be late picking up your student, please send a message to the office as soon as possible.

Drop off or pick up outside of normal hours

If for any reason you are dropping your child off after 8 AM, please check them in at the School office. If you need to pick up your child before scheduled hours, please go to the office and the Administrative staff will help you.

If you need to collect your child before the end of the school day, please communicate this to the office ahead of time, and check in at the office when you arrive.

Driving into the campus:

Please enter via the road that passes the Tropical House of Furnishings and enter through the first entry to the campus. Please exit the parking lot at the second exit, take a right and continue down the dirt road, take a left at the T-junction and this road will take you back to the entrance to Canafistula by La Finca restaurant.

What to bring to school

Kindergarten

- Snack
- Lunch
- Water Bottle
- Change of Clothing, to be left at school
- Pillow, blanket or comfort item, to be left at school
- Rain coat and Rain boots to be left at school during rainy season

Grades

- Snack
- Lunch
- Water Bottle
- Change of clothes to be left at school
- Rain coat and Rain boots can be kept at school during rainy season

What not to bring to school

- As stated in our media policy, students are not allowed to bring cell phones, smart watches or other electronic devices unless out of medical necessity.
- Please do not send your child with toys, books, or other playthings from home. Children love to exchange treasures with one another, but it is better if this activity takes place in

your home with your approval. Children may bring little gifts from nature for our nature table.

- No candy, gum or cough drops etc.

Student Assessment

Assessments provide an accurate, reliable, and authentic picture of the child's growth. The assessment process is multi-dimensional, reflecting written and artistic work, performance tasks, oral participation, homework, quizzes, tests, group and individual projects and presentations, and behavior in social and learning situations with tangible results. In other words, the assessment focuses on the things that students say, do, and create as measures of student progress.

Parent teacher conferences

Student progress is reported through parent/teacher conferences offered twice per year. Parents and teachers are welcome to make additional appointments to discuss student progress, as needed. Teachers will contact parents if concerns arise regarding a student's progress in school. It is also essential that teachers be made aware of any changes in your child's life that might affect their performance in school.

Parent teacher conferences are normally scheduled in September and February. There is no school on this day, but child care is provided during the conference.

Student progress reports

Narrative reports are sent to parents at the end of the school year and will include a written narrative/summary of the child's progress throughout the year. The portfolio of student work that is collected over the year as evidence of student learning is also sent home at the end of the year.

First Grade Readiness

At Pacífico Internacional, a child must turn 6 by April 1 to move to Grade 1. Between January and March, all Kindergarten students whose birthdays fall within the school's guidelines for Grade 1 are formally assessed by their Kindergarten Teacher for First Grade readiness. Because every child's rate of growth and development is unique, careful consideration of readiness is necessary. It is important that the children have reached the level of maturity necessary to support their success in Grade 1,

When there are questions regarding a student's readiness, the Kindergarten Teacher discusses their concerns with parents as early in the school year as possible. This process is most effective when parents and Teacher work together and communicate with openness and honesty. When a Kindergarten Teacher determines that a student is not ready for Grade 1, due to the child's individual rate of maturation, an additional year of Kindergarten may be recommended.

If the child's parents wish for this recommendation to be reviewed further, and the Kindergarten Teacher agrees that the child is "borderline" (i.e., there are both positives and negatives to having the student experience another year of Kindergarten versus moving on to the Grade 1) the situation is reviewed by the Early Childhood Pedagogical Chair, who may request input from other faculty members, before a final recommendation is made.

Ages of students in the Grades

As mentioned above, at Pacífico Internacional, students must turn 6 before April 1 to move into Grade One. This corresponds to the following for the other grades:

- Children must turn 7 by April before they enter Grade 2
- Children must turn 8 by April before they enter Grade 3
- Children must turn 9 by April before they enter Grade 4
- Children must turn 10 by April before they enter Grade 5
- Children must turn 11 by April before they enter Grade 6
- Children must turn 12 by April before they enter Grade 7
- Children must turn 13 by April before they enter Grade 8

Student Behavior and Discipline

Code of Conduct

Expectations of Student Behavior

Students at Pacífico Internacional are expected to be polite, courteous, and respectful to all members of the School community -- teachers, staff, other students, volunteers and guests. This includes showing respect for both the School's property and the property of others.

Students are also expected to be appropriately prepared for class and cooperate with School staff in maintaining safety, order, and discipline. Students throughout the grades are expected to be honest and truthful while maintaining diligence in their studies.

Ensuring a safe and healthy School environment requires that students abide by all School rules and regulations. It is the responsibility of each and every employee of the School to enforce the Student Code of Conduct. However, serious or repeated infractions may necessitate the involvement of the appropriate teacher, Pedagogical Chair, School Counselor or Head of School, and may also include the student's parents or guardians.

Prohibited conduct

Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- General Violations of School Rules
 - Violating communicated campus or classroom standards of behavior
 - Failing to comply with directives given by School personnel

- Leaving School grounds or School-sponsored events or activities without permission
- Damaging, vandalizing or stealing School property or property owned by others
- Violating safety rules
- Cheating, plagiarism, or any other form of academic dishonesty, including copying another student's work, using unauthorized materials or artificial intelligence (AI) tools to complete assignments or assessments without prior authorization, or assisting others in dishonest academic practices.
- Cutting or skipping class
- Behaving in any way that disrupts the School environment or educational process
- Continuously breaking School dress code
- Inappropriate Physical or Verbal Conduct
 - Physically aggressive, threatening, or abusive behavior (threatened or actual)
 - Verbally abusive behavior and/or written threats, including those made on the internet. This includes the use of profanity, vulgar language, or obscene gestures
 - Use of slur-language. The school will not tolerate insults or any slur-language related to ability, appearance, culture, gender, home language, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or social class
 - Harassment or Discrimination - including any continuous or severe behavior that has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment including slurs, jokes, remarks, or other gestures that discriminate based upon a person's characteristics including (but not limited to) race and appearance.
 - Engaging in other inappropriate physical contact, whether consensual or not
 - Bullying and Cyberbullying
 - Making false accusations or hoaxes regarding School safety
 - Aggressive or disruptive action that disrupts or interferes with School activities

Student Discipline

The disciplinary response to any violation of the Student Code of Conduct draws on the professional judgment of the teachers and administrators responsible for making such a decision, using a range of discipline management techniques.

Corporal punishment is not permitted under any circumstances at Pacifico Internacional. If a student presents an immediate danger to themselves or to others, they may be physically restrained only for the purpose of ensuring either their own safety or the safety of others.

Disciplinary action may include one or more of the following responses, based upon a review of the criteria outlined above:

- Verbal correction

- Giving the child a breather/ time to cool off
- Seating changes in the classroom
- Sending the student to the main office, or other designated area
- School duties or community service activities in another class or designated area of the School
- Counseling by teachers, School counselor or mental health professionals, or appropriate administrative personnel
- Parent-teacher conferences
- Confiscation of items that disrupt the educational process
- Withdrawal of certain privileges
- Behavioral contracts
- Referral to outside services, such as counseling or other mental health services
- Suspension or expulsion from the school
- Other strategies and consequences as deemed appropriate to the circumstances by the Pedagogical Chair(s), School Counselor or Head of School.

Pacífico Internacional is committed to healthy and successful students and healthy social relationships among students, teachers and all members of the school community. This value is reflected throughout the curriculum and implicit in the working of the school.

Discipline for Kindergarten students

Each child will be encouraged and supported to develop positive relationships and learn social skills. Our goal is to provide a safe and healthy learning and living environment in which each child can feel secure.

Families can expect teachers to:

- Model appropriate, respectful behaviour at all times
- Promote the development of positive social skills including self-esteem and self-control
- Encourage children to understand and follow simple rules
- Supervise the children at all times
- Establish clear, consistent and simple expectations
- Acknowledge children's feelings
- Demonstrate respectful affection and caring to each child
- Give direction and redirection through action and example as the main way of guiding children.

We encourage families to ask about guidance and discipline methods as questions arise. We are committed to enhancing knowledge of child development and Waldorf approaches to child-rearing practices. Ask your teacher for suggested readings.

Discipline for Grades students

Teachers take disciplinary action in a variety of ways and each teacher has his or her own special techniques for encouraging children's behaviour to bring about positive change. A

procedure for respectfully and effectively working with students who regularly require discipline has been established. In all areas of discipline, close communication with parents is necessary and assumed to be part of the ongoing support we offer our students.

If a student is having ongoing problems with behaviour that is seen to be disrupting the learning, well-being, and/or safety of students, teachers, and themselves, the student will be referred to the “Care Team” and the following steps will be taken to try and assist the child in improving this behaviour.

- The teacher(s) will meet with the School Counselor to discuss the incident(s)/ behaviours. A plan of action will be determined.
- The teacher will meet with the parents and Counselor to get feedback from the parents, and to offer a plan of action to the parents.
- The teacher, parents, and Counselor will meet and agree on how to go forward. Either using the plan of action from the teacher and counselor, or another mutually agreed upon resolution addressing the behaviour.
- The plan for the child will be put into place at school and/or at home.
- The Counselor will meet with the teacher to make sure that the plan is working. If necessary, the parents will be called in for feedback.
- If the plan is not working, the “care team” will be asked to meet and discuss the behaviours, the plan, and the reasons it is not working. The opinions of this team will be considered, and either a new plan brought forth, or a decision that perhaps the school cannot meet the needs of this particular child. This decision will only be made after all possible avenues have been considered.

Dress Code

At Pacífico Internacional we keep dress simple. Children wear a Pacífico Internacional t-shirt each day, along with comfortable, hard-wearing clothing they can move and play in. A minimal uniform keeps mornings easy, keeps the focus on learning rather than on what anyone is wearing, and means no child stands out for what their family can afford.

Every day

- A Pacífico Internacional t-shirt
- Comfortable bottoms that stand up to rugged outdoor play
- Closed-toe shoes
- A hat - the sun here is strong and the children spend much of the day outdoors

Please choose clothing, shoes and hats without large brand logos or graphics.

Dressed for the weather

Discovering the play possibilities of every kind of weather is part of a child's education, and we go outside in all but the most inclement conditions. In the dry season, please send a sun hat. In the wet season, please send a raincoat and rubber boots. Expect mud. We suggest keeping special-occasion clothing at home.

Please leave at home

- Media-inspired clothing and distracting images.

Popular media imagery is absorbing for young children and pulls them away from their own imaginative play. School clothing — tops and bottoms alike — should be free of graphic images, lettering, numbers, sequins and beads.

- Play tattoos, watches, jewelry, light-up shoes and nail polish.

Students in grades need running shoes on PE days.

If a school shirt is forgotten.

It happens. We keep spare shirts in the office and will lend one for the day for \$5. Please return it clean within a week; shirts not returned are billed to the family at \$20. If forgotten shirts become a regular pattern, we'll get in touch - usually there's something simple we can sort out together.

Questions

If any part of this is difficult for your family, please talk to us. We would always rather find a solution with you than have a child miss out.

Student Support Services

Social and Emotional Care

It is the goal of Pacifico Internacional to work to develop social health and wellness by establishing an environment of mutual respect, safety and inclusion within the school community that addresses social difficulties using an understanding of child development and Waldorf pedagogical insights. Each class builds a solid, age-appropriate classroom community through daily rhythms, class agreements, and other tools. These are at the heart of nurturing healthy behavior.

Students may be given extra support when they are having difficulties in the social realm. These difficulties may be noticed by teachers at recess or in the classroom and may include (but are not limited to) non-inclusion, excluding/being excluded, and bullying/being bullied, teasing/being teased.

Identifying Bullying Behavior

Pacifico Internacional does not tolerate any form of bullying at the school. In considering the social health of the school environment, it is important to identify behaviors and situations that are no longer healthy. Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is often repeated or is habitual, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems.

In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

An Imbalance of Power: People who bully use their power (such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity) to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.

Repetition: Bullying behaviors happen more than once and are a part of a larger pattern of interactions between students.

Response to bullying: Bullying is not tolerated at Pacifico Internacional. If bullying does occur, the school will follow the disciplinary guidelines outlined above. If bullying occurs, the school's counseling program will support the students using tools and practices intended to build emotional resilience and strengthen children's emotional well being.

Student Health and Illness

Pacifico Internacional feels strongly that the best place for a sick child is at home with their family. The school does not have facilities to care for children who come to school ill. If your child has any of the following communicable conditions, please notify the school immediately and keep your child home: strep throat, staph infection, impetigo, hand, foot and mouth disease, other typical childhood diseases, lice, scabies, etc.

Should such a condition arise in any of our students, a note will be sent out to the families of that class so that parents may be on the lookout for symptoms in their children.

We ask that you support and respect any teacher or staff member's decision to send a child home. A child needs to be free of fever for at least 24 hours (without the use of fever suppressing medicine) before returning to school. A child who becomes ill at school will be given a quiet place to rest until a parent arrives to pick them up.

Any child sent home will be given a note in their backpack or lunch box indicating the date that the child can return to school. The date will allow the child to rest at home for 24 hours from the time that the child was picked up. This will help us ensure that any spread of illness will be limited.

Children should not be sent to school with the following symptoms:

- **Fever of 100.4 / 38 C or more:** the child should be kept at home 24 hours after the temperature has normalized (without the use of fever suppressing medicine).
- **Diarrhea:** the child should be kept at home 24 hours after the diarrhea stops.
- **Vomiting:** the child should be kept home 24 hours after the vomiting stops.
- A deep chesty or croupy cough.
- Any undiagnosed rash.
- Draining ears or sores
- Irritability or inability to cope with a group situation because of not feeling well.
- Severe cold symptoms such as a runny nose with yellow colored mucus or watery eyes.
- Any infectious disease or contagious condition.

It is important for us to let other families know of signs and symptoms to look out for if their child appears to be sick. Let us know immediately if your child has been exposed to: Chicken Pox, Conjunctivitis, Roseola, Coxsackie, Impetigo, Measles, Scarlet fever, Strep Throat, Fifth's Disease, and Lice.

Minor Injuries

In the case of a minor injury occurring at School, basic first aid will be administered and the parents will be notified at pick up. In the case where the child bumps their head, the parent will be notified immediately even if it is relatively mild. Please ensure that your contact information and emergency contact details are always up to date in the office.

Medications

If your child must take medication during school, it must be left in the office with written, dated permission specifying the dosage and permission to administer. This includes homeopathic remedies and natural medications. No child is allowed to self administer any medications or supplements. If it needs to be kept cold, please send it with an ice pack as we do not have refrigeration in the office.

Lice

From time to time there are outbreaks of lice. The presence of lice is not a sign of lack of cleanliness. It is a treatable condition. Any student found with lice or nits will be sent home. After treatment, the child will be allowed to return to school once no nits are present. Before sending the treated child back to school, parents should check for nits and inform the office that the child is nit-free. Upon the student's return to school, they must be checked in the office and be clear of lice and nits before coming back to class. The School Office has educational information about lice, as well as information on various products that can be used for treating lice.

Impetigo

Impetigo is a highly contagious bacterial skin infection. Students with Impetigo must stay home until sores are no longer oozing or after 24-48 hours of antibiotic treatment. Sores must be covered with bandaids.

Injuries at home

Please inform the teacher of any injury or accident to your child that has happened at home. This should occur in writing or by email well ahead of the beginning of the school day.

Accidents and Insurance

Every precaution is taken to ensure the safety of students at school and on field trips. If an accident occurs, immediate first-aid will be given by the school and parents/guardians will be notified promptly. If the school is unable to reach the parent/guardian, emergency contact, or doctor, the student will be transported and treated at the nearest medical facility for their well-being and best interest. All students are required to have school accident insurance and thus will be registered with the school INS policy. The closest and most comprehensive medical center to the school is the Hospital Metropolitano de Huacas. It is important to note that this insurance operates on a reimbursement basis: the student's legal representative must cover the cost of care at the time and then apply for reimbursement from the INS.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, your child will be taken to the Hospital Metropolitano in Huacas (Tel: +506 4000 3822). Please make sure we have current and correct phone numbers on file in your child(ren)s student record so that we can reach you in case of emergency. Parents are required to provide an emergency medical authorization in case of emergency. Please update student records immediately upon any change in providers, contact information, permissions, medications, etc.

Lunch and Nutrition Guidelines

Teachers will provide an environment of gratitude before snack and lunch by allowing time for students to recite a verse, sing a song or have a moment of quiet. Students are asked to bring a snack and lunch to school each day. The school does not have the facilities to prepare, warm, or refrigerate school lunches brought from home. Parents are asked to pack lunches with attention given to the health and growing needs of children. Healthy, well balanced meals provide essential nutrition for their brains and bodies to perform optimally. Parents are asked to avoid items with high sugar contents.

Candy, soda pop, and other foods high in sugar or caffeine are not acceptable in school lunches. Teachers will not allow students to eat these at school. They will put them away, send them back home, and parents will be notified. Teachers will communicate with parents at the beginning of the year concerning lunch expectations. Food allergies must be reported to the School to ensure a health plan is in place.

Food allergies

We do not currently have any students or staff in the school with severe life- threatening allergies (anaphylactic reaction). These allergens may include all nuts, soy, fish and kiwi. If not treated immediately, an anaphylactic reaction causes shock, suffocation and death within minutes of the allergic reaction commencing. Simply touching a surface that has had an allergen product on it can generate these life-threatening reactions. Should we be informed of a child with such allergies, we will let the families know so that they can ensure a safe school environment for that child.

We are seeking your support in creating a safe environment. If you're informed by your class teacher that a certain allergen causing food must be avoided in your child's classroom, please respect the request, and do not provide that food. Also we ask that you:

- Encourage your child to not share or swap their food or drink bottles with others.
- Encourage your child to wash their hands before and after eating.

Vaccination records

Costa Rican law requires that all Costa Rican children be vaccinated and that a record of their vaccinations be kept on file at the school.

School Communication

At Pacifico Internacional, we believe that open and strong communication is the foundation of a healthy partnership between the school and families. We value transparency, trust, and

collaboration, knowing that clear communication helps us better support your child's growth and well-being.

Your insights, questions, and feedback are vital to us. Together, through honest and respectful dialogue, we can create a positive, nurturing environment where every student thrives and every family feels included.

We encourage parents to bring any questions or concerns directly to the school, rather than using public channels like the community WhatsApp group.

Ways to communicate

Face to face communication is always advised if possible, as it is much more effective than written messages. It allows for immediate connection, clearer understanding, and the opportunity to interpret tone and emotions directly.

This applies to both questions you have for your teacher as well as administrative questions for the office.

If face to face is not an option, parents are asked to use the following for telephone/ WhatsApp or email:

Issue	E-mail	Telephone/ WhatsApp
Any urgent message		+(506) 8762-6927
Administrative questions	info@waldorf.cr	+(506) 8762-6927
Financial questions	billing@waldorf.cr	+(506) 8762-6927
Teachers	Your teacher will communicate to you the best way to contact them.	

Teacher/Family Communication

The parent-teacher relationship is a partnership, with teachers and parents coming together over the responsibility of educating and nurturing the healthy development of a child. Through ongoing communication and dialogue, the people closest to the child build a strong relationship, with the child's best interests at heart. Differences of opinion are inevitable and necessary for any living and creative process. However, the parent-teacher relationship must be built on mutual trust and respect, with a shared responsibility for resolving problems and issues.

Maintaining a trusting and healthy relationship requires that parents discuss any classroom concerns with the main Teacher for their class first. It is the Teacher's responsibility to be available and to listen to parent concerns in an objective way. It is the parent's responsibility to share their concerns in a respectful and non-judgmental manner. Constructive dialogue is only possible when it comes from a place of trust and respect for the efforts of both the parents and

the Teacher. A commitment by all members of the School community to participate in respectful relationships ensures open, honest and timely communication.

The first line of communication about your child's experience in the classroom should be brought directly to your teacher. However, we ask that you do not bring issues to the attention of your teacher while they are with the children as their attention is on them. Your teacher will communicate to you the best way to contact them.

Where parents believe their concerns are not being heard or acknowledged by a teacher, they may bring unresolved questions or concerns to the school counselor or Head of School who will work with the teacher(s) and parents towards a positive resolution.

Call the office directly for ALL urgent messages, and the office will relay the information to the teacher.

School staff do their best to respond to communications within 24 hours, or on Monday if the message is sent over the weekend.

Community WhatsApp Group Guidelines

As mentioned above, the school strongly encourages open and respectful communication. The community WhatsApp Group is meant to provide support to community members and is not a channel to air grievances with the school. We ask you to please respect this and bring any concern you may have with the school directly to your teacher or the administration.

We also ask you to be respectful in your communication with other community members. Please keep in mind we are a group of individuals from many different countries and cultures with varying views on life. Disrespectful or inappropriate language will not be tolerated in the group chat.

Financial policies

Tuition

Families commit to the school on a yearly basis, if a family is unable to attend, or chooses to be away for extended periods of the year, full tuition is still expected for the student. Students who enroll after the school year has started will be offered a prorated tuition rate based on the amount of time that is left.

Tuition must be paid either in full by the start of the school year (which provides a 5% discount on the annual tuition) or in 10 monthly payments starting on 1 August.

The school offers discounts for families with more than one student in the school; the first additional sibling is given a 10% discount on tuition and second or more siblings are offered 15% discount on tuition. This discount does not apply to any of the school fees.

Since the school relies on tuition payments to pay its faculty and staff, it is very important that families pay on time. If a monthly tuition invoice is not paid by the 5th of each month, a \$20 late fee will be added to the invoice. If the invoice is still not paid by the first of the following month, an additional \$50 fee is added to the invoice.

Fees

Registration free

A one-time registration fee is paid by all students enrolling in the school.

Enrollment fee

Enrollment fee is paid annually before the start of the school year by all students. This is a non-refundable fee.

Materials Fee

This fee covers materials used by the students in the classroom and is paid annually.

This fee allows us to provide our students the beautiful, artistic and natural learning materials that are an integral part of a Waldorf education. Care and stewardship of these materials is taught in class. Replacement fees will be assessed for lost or damaged materials.

Insurance fee

An insurance fee is paid annually by the parent of each student so the child is covered by INS.

Safety and Emergency Procedures

School Cancellations and Dismissals

In case of heavy rains, earthquakes, wildfires, lack of water or electricity, or other

unsafe conditions, the School may choose to close, delay the start of the school day, or have an early dismissal based on the following guidelines.

In any of these cases, families will be notified via WhatsApp. In the case of school cancellations or early dismissals, all school events, activities, and extracurriculars will also be canceled on the corresponding day.

Inclement Weather

The weather in Guanacaste can range from extremely dry, with strong winds from December to April, to extremely wet, humid and muddy from May to November.

The school reserves the right to suspend classes due to situations deemed unsafe.

We are obligated to comply with relevant Ministry of Health and/or Government Executive Decree closures.

- In the event a yellow or orange alert declared by the National Emergency Committee in the region of the school, classes will continue as regularly scheduled.

- If the National Emergency Committee declares a red alert for our region, the school will carefully consider suspending classes or scheduling an early dismissal depending on school accessibility and teacher/staff availability.

If a State of Emergency is declared for our region, school will be canceled and/or an early dismissal will be scheduled (if students are in classes).

Power Outages

The school does not have the ability to safely operate in the case of extended power outages.

- If there is a scheduled power outage for more than 2 hours between 8am and 2pm, school will be canceled.
- If there is an unscheduled power outage for more than 2 hours during the school day and no indication of power restoration from the authorities, students will be let out of school according to the early dismissal policy.

Water service interruption

The School has a water tank to help ease times of water service interruption. If a line breaks or water interruption occurs that will interfere with campus water supply, the school will take the following measures.

- If there is a scheduled water service interruption for more than 3 hours, then we will cancel classes.
- If there is an unscheduled water service interruption for more than 3 hours, then we will schedule an early dismissal as per the below policy.

Other circumstances and evacuations

Wildfires, earthquakes and health emergencies may also require an early dismissal or school closure. If the environment in and around the school facilities is deemed unsafe to learn in, the school will engage in an immediate evacuation. Evacuations will involve a safe and orderly departure via parent/guardian pick-up.

Early dismissals

If there is a circumstance that requires early dismissal, the school will attempt to provide families with at least 2 hour notice so that they may plan accordingly. The school will do everything possible to keep students at school.

Make-up days

If more than 3 total school days are missed in a year due to canceled school days, then the school will schedule make-up days by reducing school breaks accordingly.

Parent involvement, community events and festivals

A child's educational experience is significantly enhanced when their parents or guardians participate actively in the life of the School. Whether working together on School events, or gathering in celebration at festivals and all-School assemblies, the goal is to maintain a strong model of community participation -- an essential part of a healthy Waldorf School. Being an involved parent at the school offers numerous benefits that positively impact not only your child but the entire school community.

Involvement sets a powerful example for your child, demonstrating the importance of community, service, and responsibility. It also encourages your child to develop a stronger sense of belonging and pride in their school.

We invite and encourage all parents to get involved — your presence and support are invaluable to our school's success!

Throughout the school year, there are several traditional seasonal activities in which families are invited to participate.

Festivals

Celebrating festivals is one way that children can experience and participate in the rhythms of nature and of the changing seasons. It also connects them to the deepest elements of our common humanity. We hope to awaken in the children an overall sense of reverence, joy and wonder through our festival celebrations.

In order to be sensitive to the diversity of cultures and beliefs represented in our community, we like to focus on the common aspects among festivals such as love, light, family, food and simple rituals. By looking at the underlying reasons behind a particular festival, we can then translate the celebration into activities that are meaningful and age-appropriate for young children. Typically, these include stories, food, games, songs, and simple crafts. We ardently strive to avoid the commercial aspects of holidays in the classroom. Families may volunteer to provide a special snack for those festivals that coincide with our school holidays or for any occasion that is important to their own tradition.

Throughout history, in all civilizations, there have been rituals and celebrations reflecting nature's rhythms. These celebrations or festivals reflect our relationship to nature and spirit, and to our life on earth. Festivals bring shared consciousness and help to unite the community. It is important to note that some of the festivals are linked to nature's rhythms and seasons that originate from Waldorf traditions from Northern Europe, and may therefore not be completely aligned with Costa Rican seasons.

In a Waldorf school, the weekly school rhythm and the annual seasonal festivals of nature and humanity are celebrated in ways that help foster wonder, reverence and gratitude. These qualities nourish the child's capacity to be responsible to the human community.

Teachers, parents, and children work together in anticipation of a variety of festivals that are celebrated and appropriate to the child's age and curriculum. We like to acknowledge and share

other religious customs and celebrations enjoyed by our families. There are many books available about festivals around the world.

Although this is not a comprehensive list of festivals and activities celebrated throughout the school year, the following are the main festivals that we celebrate at Pacífico Internacional:

Costa Rican Independence - Lantern Walk

At our school, we celebrate Costa Rican Independence on September 14, by bringing together two meaningful traditions: Costa Rica's Lantern Parade (Desfile de Faroles) and the Waldorf tradition of St. Martin's Lantern Walk.

The Lantern Parade commemorates the eve of Costa Rica's Independence Day and symbolizes the light that carried the news of independence throughout Central America. St. Martin's Lantern Walk (traditionally celebrated in Waldorf schools in the Northern Hemisphere around St. Martin's Day on 11 November), honors the story of St. Martin of Tours, who shared his cloak with a man in need, inspiring the values of generosity, compassion, and kindness.

By celebrating these traditions together on one day, we honor both Costa Rica's cultural heritage and the universal values embraced by Waldorf education. The lanterns become a symbol not only of freedom and hope, but also of the inner light, kindness, and care that each person can bring into the world. Students create their own lanterns in the weeks leading up to the celebration, and our school community gathers for an evening lantern walk, songs, and reflection.

Michaelmas - festival of courage

Michaelmas falls on September 29, which starts the four-week harvest season in the Northern Hemisphere. In Celtic tradition, St. Michael represents the unconquered hero, fighting against evil and the powers of darkness. He is a model for valour and courage for people to develop their inner soul life and the challenge is to awaken the cultivation of the inner life. At Pacífico Internacional, Michaelmas is a day where the children face physical and mental challenges for each element (earth, air, water, fire), requiring their courage and strength to overcome them. In addition, Michaelmas fosters community in the acts of service to our local area and people. It offers a time to collectively reflect gratitude for the earth's abundance.

Enchanted Forest

Close to Halloween (October 31) the upper grades offer an "enchanted forest" for the kindergarten and lower grades to enjoy. The children meet with a variety of friendly creatures who entertain and delight them, with magic and laughter, songs and small treats.

Spiral of Light

This is one of the most beautiful and memorable of the festivals that families of the kindergarten and grades share during the Advent season.

The children go one at a time through the spiral made of palm fronds and beautiful shells. When they arrive at the center, each child lights their candle and then places it somewhere on the

pathway to light the way for the next child. It is a reminder of the journey inward each of us must make.

May Faire

In the Northern Hemisphere, May Faire has long marked the arrival of spring and the awakening of the earth after winter. Here in Costa Rica, we embrace this tradition in our own way, celebrating the beginning of the rainy season, a time when the land comes alive with fresh growth, vibrant green landscapes, and renewed abundance. While the seasons differ, the spirit of gratitude, hope, and connection to nature remains the same, making May Faire a meaningful celebration of life's ever-renewing cycles. At Pacífico Internacional, May Faire is a community celebration filled with dancing around the May Pole, singing, flower crowns, fun crafts and games, and delicious food.

Assemblies

Throughout the school year, students in Grades 1–8 gather for a weekly assembly on Friday mornings at 8:00AM. Parents are warmly invited and encouraged to attend these special gatherings, which provide an opportunity to share what is happening in the classrooms, as well as strengthen our school community.

If there will not be an assembly on a particular Friday, families will be notified in advance.

Rhythm in the family life

A simple, predictable routine works best for the young child. We encourage parents to slow down the pace. Choose simplicity: lessons and early sport activities can wait a few years. Creating healthy rhythms in your home is a gift to the security and healthy development of your child. Predictable bedtimes, mealtimes and daily schedules are difficult to achieve in this very fast paced world. They are essential to providing a harmonious environment in which the young child can flourish. Young children are very active, moving and doing, and their bodies are physically growing. An early dinner, quiet evening activities and an early bedtime enable a child to be up and ready for school the next day. When children live with consistent and clear routines, they feel secure in knowing what to expect next. When this occurs, transitions to meals, to sleep or other activities become easier, and conflict is lessened. We know that creating a healthy family life can be difficult in our complicated world. We are always happy to meet with parents to find ways to help individual families work out these issues.

At home, parents can help the young child by setting clear limits and expectations. Children love to be involved with real activities. Helping to prepare meals and to clean up, caring for plants and animals, being out in nature, and having ample time for imaginative play both indoors and out are the essential elements of a child's day. Even a three or four-year-old child can have a chore that they do every day at the same time. Setting the napkins at dinner, giving the dog water every morning, placing the toy trucks into the garage every evening are just a few suggestions that can help develop healthy habits and a strong will. Parents should be making the decisions for the child. The children look to their parents as models for their own development. When children are given too many choices, they can become uncertain and nervous. Children need the model of loving, consistent adults to guide their development.

Bedtime routines can provide a wonderful opportunity to slow down the pace of the day and be together with your child in a quiet, warm setting. Young children should be in bed early (by 7:00 or 7:30 PM). This will enable your child to get a good rest and give parents time for themselves as well. Parents can choose a bedtime routine that is repeated the same way every evening. Some families may choose to light a candle. A story can be read or told (one story, not many, works best), a simple lullaby, verse or prayer can be spoken and then the candle is blown out and it is time to sleep. When a routine is established every day at the same time, the child becomes accustomed to the rhythm and feels secure, looking forward to this special time each day. Teachers will be happy to work with families to give suggestions.