



## **Parent Handbook 2023–2024**

**BELLWOOD PRESCHOOL**  
**2359 WEST INGOMAR ROAD; PITTSBURGH, PA 15237**

**To our parents:** The Bellwood staff want to take this time to say hello and to tell you how glad we are to have you and your child be a part of Bellwood Preschool. We hope this year will be a unique and rewarding experience for you all. We look forward to getting to know you. At Bellwood, we feel strongly about the advantages of parent involvement. We want to encourage your participation in our preschool. Please join us in making this year a very special year for your child.

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***Bellwood Administration***

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**Melissa Nelson**

Director

Office: 412-366-3812

director@bellwoodpreschool.com

**Joanne Scherer**

Office Administrator/Treasurer

Office: 412-366-3812

office@bellwoodpreschool.com

**Nicole Seaman**

Registrar

412-398-3135

registrar@bellwoodpreschool.com

**Bellwood Office**

(non urgent calls): 412-366-3812

**Bellwood Building**

(**urgent** calls during school hours): 412-366-9216

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***Bellwood Teaching Staff***

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**Sharon Abraham**

Teacher

**Dan Daugherty**

Teacher

**Susan Flanders**

Assistant Director/

Lead Teacher

**Dan Hill**

Assistant Teacher

**Toni Kainaroi**

Enrichment Program Teacher

**Alyssa Kleysteuber**

Volunteer

**Diane Marunczak**

Teacher

**Emily Moschitta**

Lead Teacher

**Brandon Neiman**

Teacher

**Michelle O'Keefe**

Teacher

**Denise Sobehart**

Teacher

**Becky Sunderlin**

Teacher

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Bellwood is a community service offered by the Unitarian Universalist Church of the North Hills (UUCNH) and is a non-profit organization.

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## TEACHER BIOGRAPHIES

**MELISSA NELSON (Director)**—Melissa has a BA in biology from Bucknell University and an MS in microbiology from the University of Rochester. After becoming a mother, her focus shifted to empowering her children to become the best versions of themselves, which led to finding Bellwood Preschool. While her 3 children attended Bellwood, Melissa served in many roles, including Board President, KidStuff Sale Coordinator, and Yearbook Coordinator. Only a few years after her youngest child entered elementary school, Melissa found herself back at Bellwood—this time as the Registrar. Having explored professional work in scientific and medical writing and copyediting, Melissa realized that no work was as fulfilling as her time with Bellwood, so she is thrilled to be back again, this time as Director. Bellwood will always feel like home, and Melissa (and all the Nelsons!) are excited to be a part of this very special place that helps children to not only discover the joy of learning, but also (what originally attracted her to Bellwood as a new mother) empower them to become the best versions of themselves.

**SUSAN FLANDERS (Assistant Director/Lead Teacher)**—Susan is certified in Elementary Education and as a Reading Specialist. She was employed for 12 years by the Quaker Valley School District, where she taught kindergarten, first grade, and second grade. Susan is married to Ron, and they have three daughters: Katie, Grace, and Emma. Susan and her family joined the Bellwood family when her daughters attended Bellwood. Before joining Bellwood as a teacher, Susan was a guest reader countless times, often acted as a substitute teacher, and served as Publicity Chairperson on the Parent Board. Susan happily spends most of her time at Bellwood preparing our K-Kids for their next big experience in kindergarten!

**EMILY MOSCHITTA (Lead PM Teacher)**—Emily has a BS in Secondary Education/English from Edinboro University. She also holds a private school certification for grades K–12. She taught at McEwan Open School in Shadyside from 1992–1998 and at Sewickley Academy from 1998–2009. She is a certified personal trainer who specializes in prenatal/postpartum exercise design. Emily is a Bellwood alum and is thrilled to be back as a part of the staff. She and her husband, John, live in Wexford with their two children, Johnny D. and Tommy. She is looking forward to a wonderful year!

**SHARON ABRAHAM (Teacher)**—Sharon has a BS in Elementary Education, with a Master's Internship in Teaching from the University of Pittsburgh. She taught for five years at the Community Day School in Squirrel Hill and one year at the Keshet Preschool in Atlanta, GA. She was a Bellwood mom, Board Secretary, and Book Club/Book Sale coordinator while her children were here. She lives in Sewickley in the midst of five wooded acres (you'll never find her!) with her husband, Bill; their children, Austin, Blair, and Grant; and their dogs, Ruby and Bean. She has a passion for children, gardening, decorating, and travel, in that order. Sharon is a master storyteller. She keeps the children spellbound as she shares her love of children's literature.

**TONI KAINAROI (Enrichment Program Teacher)**—Toni attended the Art Institute of Pittsburgh where she earned a fine arts degree in Visual Communications. Realizing the dramatic effect art can have on children and adults with disabilities, Toni returned to school to pursue a degree in Art Therapy from Carlow College. She lives in Ingomar with her husband, Mike, and children, Zoe, Sophia, and Samuel. The family also has two dogs, Max and Coolie, plus assorted turtles, fish, and whatever else wanders into the house. While raising her family, she did freelance graphic design from her home for Mt. Lebanon Magazine and SAE in Warrendale. She was very active as a parent volunteer in the Ingomar Elementary School. Toni joined Bellwood following daughter Sophia's Bellwood experience. The

children respond to the warm and sincere way she communicates with them and enjoy her creative approach to learning.

**BRANDON NEIMAN (Teacher)**—Brandon is certified in elementary and early childhood education. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree in education with a minor in creative arts from Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Since 2006, she has taught kindergarten for Kalamazoo Public Schools in Michigan and Young Scholars Charter School in State College, Pennsylvania. She has also been the lead preschool teacher at a private school and for Head Start. Brandon is married to Matt, and they have two children, Harper and Reid. Before coming on as a Bellwood teacher, she often helped out in the classroom and subbed for some of the teachers, as well as serving as a co-chair of Publicity and Communications on the Bellwood Parent Board. Brandon loves traveling with her family, being outside, and is especially fond of teaching art and science to small people.

**DENISE SOBEHART (Teacher)**—Denise has a BS and MS of Education in Speech and Language Pathology from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. She also holds a PA teaching certificate in Speech and Language Impaired for grades K–12. Prior to coming to Bellwood, Denise worked in San Diego and Pittsburgh as a speech/language pathologist at the preschool, elementary, and high school levels. She fell in love with Bellwood when her two daughters attended school here. Denise lives in Franklin Park with her husband, Bob, and her two daughters, Emily and Allison. She enjoys hiking with her family, snapping pictures with her newfound photography passion, exploring children’s literature with her daughters, and reading the latest and greatest best sellers.

**BECKY SUNDERLIN (Teacher)**—Becky has a BS and MS of Education in Speech and Language Pathology from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. She has provided speech and language services in a variety of educational settings including elementary and secondary levels, as well as in a private setting devoted to children with intellectual and behavioral challenges. In addition, she has also provided speech services to diverse populations in skilled nursing facilities. Becky has served on the Bellwood Board and has often acted as a substitute while two of her three daughters attended. Becky lives in Franklin Park with her husband, Shawn, and their three daughters. As a family, they enjoy many outdoor activities including kayaking, hiking, and gardening.

**DAN DAUGHERTY (Teacher)**—Dan’s four children (Mady, Amara, Lily, and Coen) all attended Bellwood and he and his wife, Erin, fell in love with both the school and the environment. Dan has a Master’s Degree in Teaching (K–8) from the University of Pittsburgh and before that earned a B.A. in Communications (Film & Video) from Penn State University. Dan has 6 years of experience teaching public school grades 1, 2, and 3 in Pennsylvania (Penn Trafford) and Maryland (Prince George’s County). He and his family live in Franklin Park and can usually be found at the many surrounding ballfields and swimming pools cheering on the kiddos. Before joining Bellwood, Dan filled in as a substitute and also worked during enrichment camps.

**DIANE MARUNCZAK (Teacher)**—Diane has a BS in Child Development/Family Relations from Indiana University of Pennsylvania and started her career in a local daycare program. After the birth of her first daughter, Diane became a stay-at-home mom, where she poured her energy into the caretaking of her two girls, Kailyn and Emily. During her years as a SAHM, Diane spent a great deal of time researching and gaining an understanding of children with food allergies and even authored a children’s book, *ABC, Is that Safe for Me?*. She has also been an active volunteer in her daughters’ elementary school, where she is co-chair of both the Staff Appreciation Committee and Yearbook Committee in addition to volunteering in the classroom any opportunity she gets. Diane is excited to return to teaching younger children and immediately knew that Bellwood would be a great fit for her skillset and

enthusiasm. Diane resides in Wexford with her husband, daughters, and two guinea pigs. She enjoys going on family walks and outings, getting coffee with friends, and spending time with her parents.

MICHELLE O'KEEFE (teacher)—Michelle has a Bachelor's Degree in Graphic Design with a concentration in Mathematics. Directly following she obtained her Master of Arts in Teaching. She is certified in Elementary Education, Special Education N-12, and Mathematics K-12. She taught for over 10 years between Burrell High School and Shaler Middle School. Michelle is married to Sean, and they have three children together: Aidan, Grayson, and Nora. She loves spending time with her family, exploring outdoor activities, teaching math and art.

DAN HILL (Assistant Teacher)—Dan has been with Bellwood for over 40 years! Dan has an Associate's Degree in Early Childhood Education from CCAC. He has enjoyed working with the children at Bellwood and is especially helpful in the Gross Motor Room. Coaching baseball and basketball for the Challenger League of Ingomar/Franklin Park Athletic Association has been one of Dan's passions for many years. Dan enjoys gardening and making his own greeting cards, and he is an avid runner.

ALYSSA KLEYTEUBER (Volunteer)—Alyssa loves kids and they love her! She graduated from North Allegheny High School and attended A.W. Beattie Technical School, where she received an advanced certificate in the culinary arts. Her passions include jigsaw puzzles, cats, cooking, art, bowling, computers, music, movies, and reading. She also enjoys various activities at the Baierl YMCA, having fun with her friends, volunteering at Animal Friends, and family events. Alyssa has an older sister, Shelly, and lives in McCandless with her mom.

## MISSION STATEMENT

To provide children with the opportunity to become problem-solving, empowered, compassionate individuals who share a deep respect for their global village.

## BELLWOOD PRESCHOOL PARENT BOARD

Position (parent volunteer unless otherwise noted)	Name	E-mail
President	Tara Wotus	Tarawotus@gmail.com
KidStuff Sale	Emma Dauk	wilsonemmam@gmail.com
	Laura McGraw	Laura.mcgraw@gmail.com
Secretary	Katie Kurtzman	ktkurtzman@gmail.com
Publicity and Communications	Danielle Pisani	danielle.doherty@gmail.com
Special Events	Blair Merrills	babraham2171@gmail.com
Family Events	Jenny Gray	graypartyof4@yahoo.com
Building and Grounds	Shawn Sunderlin	rhfh@hotmail.com
Yearbook Coordinator	Christina Knaus	christina.knaus@gmail.com
	Kyler Shepard	kktaubert@gmail.com
Bellwood Director (Bellwood staff)	Melissa Nelson	director@bellwoodpreschool.com
Treasurer (Bellwood staff)	Joanne Scherer	office@bellwoodpreschool.com
Registrar (Bellwood staff)	Nicole Seaman	registrar@bellwoodpreschool.com

**Bellwood Parent Board Member Descriptions:** The Bellwood Parent Board consists of interested parents who volunteer their services to help the programs at the school, as well as key Bellwood staff members. Parent board member terms run for one year, beginning in June. Board meetings are held once a month, and all parents are welcome to attend. Board members call for committee members as needed. Parent board member position descriptions are as follows:

- **President:** Presides over board meetings, makes sure all board positions are filled and running smoothly, sets up committees as needed throughout the year, and coordinates staff needs with those of the board. The president also assists the treasurer with the budget and writes the annual letter to the Unitarian Universalist Church of the North Hills on the school's activities and status.
- **KidStuff Sale:** Manages (or oversees a committee to manage) the two major KidStuff Sale fundraisers. This includes coordinating seller registration, donations for the sale, parent and seller work schedules during the sale; tabulation of sold tags; overseeing the sale; and arranging (with the treasurer) disbursement of monies to sellers.
- **Secretary:** Records and distributes the minutes from all Parent Board Meetings.

- **Publicity and Communications:** Maintains the Bellwood website, is the administrator of the school's Facebook page, publicizes school events, and prepares news releases for events, if needed.
- **Special Events:** Arranges for the monthly visitor programs and plans the end-of-year picnic and off-site play dates.
- **Family Events:** Selects, plans, and implements various family social events held throughout the year (e.g., Parent Orientation, Soergel's family night, Parent's night out), oversees special opportunities such as family photography sessions, and handles Bellwood spirit-wear orders.
- **Building and Grounds:** Prepares the school building for the approaching school year (August), coordinating with the teachers any jobs that need to be done, and gets bids and hires outside labor for jobs if volunteer labor is not available (this includes painting, cleaning, repairs, etc.). Generally, the Church takes care of the outside of the building and Bellwood prepares the inside of the building according to its needs, but Bellwood takes action on the outside of the building when needed. Bellwood monitors the playground equipment and makes repairs when needed.
- **Yearbook Coordinator:** Coordinates a committee of parent volunteers to take photos of the children and special events throughout the school year; plans for the production and distribution of the yearbook.

### **Other Parent Involvement**

Parents are encouraged to share any special talents or ideas to improve Bellwood. In the past, parent volunteers have contributed their time and expertise to programs on scuba diving, keeping our brains healthy, cooking with the children, and many other activities and programs. Talents are useful in everything from helping with school parties to preparing for the end-of-year art show. Please feel free to discuss any special interests or talents you may have with any of the teachers or Parent Board members.



## BELLWOOD PRESCHOOL DAILY RHYTHM

9:00 – 9:15	AM KIDS ARRIVAL AND SETTling IN
9:15 – 9:30	HAPPY TIME
9:30 – 11:00	CHOICE OF FIVE AREA ACTIVITIES Art, Gross Motor, Cognitive, Practical Life, K-Kids A light snack is available during each session.
11:00 – 11:30	OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES, INDOOR GAMES, STORIES, SONGS
11:30	DISMISSAL OF AM KIDS
11:30 – 12:15	LUNCH (Lunch Bunch is offered on Wednesdays only; space is limited and signups are on a first-come, first-served basis)
12:30 – 12:45	PM KIDS ARRIVAL AND SETTling IN
12:45 – 1:00	HAPPY TIME
1:00 – 2:30	CHOICE OF FIVE AREA ACTIVITIES Art, Gross Motor, Cognitive, Practical Life, K-Kids A light snack is available during each session.
2:30 – 3:00	OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES, INDOOR GAMES, STORIES, SONGS
3:00**	DISMISSAL OF PM KIDS

**\*\*NOTE: For children attending on Thursday, the schedule is modified, and *Thursday dismissal is at 11:30 for 4-session students and 2:00 for 5-session students.***

## **SCHOOL AREAS**

Bellwood is a discovery-oriented school. Children are free to choose their activities. They are free to associate with all the children and adults in the school. They are not separated into small groups for control or adult-focused “lessons.” The teachers help stimulate the children’s activities with new ideas and processes. The teachers are there to praise, to establish the rules that people do not hurt each other and people respect their environment and the materials and objects in that environment, and to encourage and stimulate the children’s discovery.

### **The Cognitive Room**

This area invites children to explore reading-readiness and math-readiness materials. The equipment promotes practice in such skills as small-motor development, eye-hand coordination, memory retention, counting, sorting, grouping, and listening. This area also encourages recognition of a wide variety of object attributes such as color, shape, size, volume, and weight.

Some of the math-readiness tools found in this area are Attribute Logic Blocks, Unifix Cubes, Graduated Cylinders, Wooden Patterning and Stringing Beads, Cuisenaire Rods and cubes, Counting and Color Bears, and Metal and Wooden Shape Inserts (and a whole lot more). These tools are used to develop concepts of sorting colors, shapes, sizes, and functions of grouping, as well as recognition, measuring, and addition and subtraction. They also promote and develop small-muscle control, memory retention, and concrete and abstract concepts of math.

Our reading-readiness materials include The Listening Center, Sandpaper and Wooden Letters, Sound Cylinders, Bell Tones, Letter Box, Metal and Wooden Inserts, Marble Roll, Lotto Games, Sequence sets, and a variety of Bingo games for sound, alphabet, and numbers. Our Reading Tub offers a place to curl up with cozy pillows and good books.

There are always a variety of science activities going on in this area. In the spring, we celebrate “new life” by hatching chickens or ducks, butterflies, ladybugs, and other insects. The children are responsible for caring for our Firebelly Toads. We enjoy sprouting things under our Bellwood Grow Light.

### **The Practical Life Room**

This room gives children the opportunity to explore daily life. They wipe the tables, pour water, prepare and count the snack, bake, take turns, and set up and clean up at snack time.

The equipment used in this room strengthens fine motor control and development. This equipment includes Letter and Number Templates, Stamps, Shape Inserts, Geo Boards, Cube Pattern Trays, Puzzles, Magnet Boards, Salt Writing Trays, Sifters, and Pourers. Magic markers, pencils and crayons and lots of paper offer endless possibilities for the children to share their ideas.

### **The Art Room**

It is “the process, not the product” that is important in Bellwood’s Art Room. By the end of the school year we have introduced our children to a multitude of media, such as painting, cutting, gluing, collage, printing, sculpting, and drawing, to name just a few.

### **The Gross Motor Room**

This area enables the children to exercise their large motor control. The equipment encourages body coordination, balance, control, special awareness of self, and self-confidence. The equipment here includes Balance Beams, Mini Trampoline, Ladders, Slides, Jumping Frames, Large Waffle Blocks, Rocking Boat, Caregiving Corner, Dress-Up Chest, and Gym Mats, all of which promote construction, balance, and creativity.

### **Outdoor Play**

Our backyard offers a climbing structure, sandbox, tire swing, little yellow bus, natural areas, hiking and cooperative play. We take other pieces of equipment out when the weather allows (e.g., water table, easels & snack).

**K-Kids Pre-K Program**

The K-Kids Pre-K program is an extension of our general developmental program and shares the philosophy that learning is individual and personal. It is also a subtle transition from a child-oriented class environment to a teacher-oriented program that prepares the child for kindergarten. All four areas of the school and the K-Kids Pre-K room in the Church building constitute the complete Pre-Kindergarten program.

K-Kids students are divided into small groups and travel next door to the Church. We follow a basic format consisting of the pledge, calendar, weeks, months, and interesting events and facts. Emphasis is given to the development of vocabulary, phonics, and pre-reading skills such as visual and auditory discrimination, initial consonant sounds, vowels, rhyming, left-to-right progression, and following directions. Exercises in basic math skills include activities in counting, set theory, matching, sequencing, patterning, and basic addition and subtraction.

## **ELIGIBILITY TO BELLWOOD**

Children are eligible to attend the 3-session program (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday [AM or PM]) if they turn 3 years of age by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the current school year (and are potty trained). Children are eligible to attend the 4-session program (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday [AM or PM] and Thursday AM) or the 5-session program (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday [AM or PM] and all day Thursday) if they turn 4 years of age by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the current school year (and are potty trained).

## **REGISTRATION**

Contact the Registrar to find out if there is space available in the session you desire. An application form can be downloaded from our website at [www.bellwoodpreschool.squarespace.com](http://www.bellwoodpreschool.squarespace.com). Unless you are registering a current student or sibling of a current student, please do not send in a deposit until you have been notified that your child has been offered a space. A more detailed registration form, a child health report by a doctor, an enrollment agreement, a communicable disease waiver/release, and a medical authorization form are required before school begins. Keep in mind that registration is required for each new school year. Although we will do our best to satisfy each family's preference in regard to AM or PM assignment, there is no guarantee from year to year. The registration schedule is as follows.

- **Current Students and Siblings**

A registration form will be sent out in January for the following school year and must be returned prior by the deadline provided to secure a space for the following year. The form must be accompanied by the registration fee. Placement in AM or PM is on a first-come, first-served basis.

- **Alumni and New Students**

Bellwood has a rolling admission procedure beginning in late January for the school year starting in the fall of that year for new students and siblings of alumni. Siblings of alumni are given special consideration over new students, so please indicate "alumni family" if applicable when filling out the application form. Applications will be accepted at any time after the registration form is released (spring of the year prior to the enrollment year; so, the form for 2023–24 is released in the spring of 2022).

Please contact the registrar if you have any questions regarding these procedures.

At Bellwood Preschool, we enjoy a variety of children with individual learning styles and unique emotional and physical needs. While we make every effort to accommodate all children and families, we do reserve the right to determine if Bellwood Preschool is the best school environment for your child. The final decision regarding enrollment at Bellwood and placement in a particular session is ultimately left to the discretion of the Director.

## TUITION AND FEES

Upon enrolling your child, you are responsible for tuition and fees as outlined below.

3-Session Tuition and Fees	4-Session Tuition and Fees	5-Session Tuition and Fees
M-W-F (AM or PM)	M-W-F (AM or PM) Th (AM)	M-W-F (AM or PM) Th (all day)
\$250 registration fee*	\$300 registration fee*	\$350 registration fee*
\$2250 annual tuition (payable in 9 monthly installments of \$250)**	\$2700 annual tuition (payable in 9 monthly installments of \$300)**	\$3150 annual tuition (payable in 9 monthly installments of \$350)**

\*Please note that the registration fee is not applied as a monthly tuition payment but is used to reserve your child's space and to purchase supplies to begin the year.

\*\*Parents are welcome to pay tuition in full at the beginning of the school year or for several months in advance, if preferred. Please note that Bellwood staff plan the annual budget based on all students attending for the entire school year; thus, tuition is an annual fee that is payable regardless of any missed class time due to illness, vacation, etc. Payment is due on the first of each month; a late fee of \$25.00 is due with any payment made after the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month. A 30-day written notice is required for withdrawal; a withdrawal fee equal to 1-month's tuition installment will be assessed to help offset the financial loss from the withdrawal.

Lunch bunch is available on Wednesdays. The charge is \$7.00 to participate (you provide lunch). Advanced sign-up is required. For AM students, lunch is immediately after the session until 12:15—**please pick up your child on time**. PM students coming for lunch should arrive at 11:45, and lunch will run until the start of the afternoon session.

Tuition and fees may be paid by personal check or through online banking. Cash, credit cards and payments apps are not accepted. (Note: Cash payment for lunch bunch is accepted. Please place in an envelope with your child's name and the date to avoid loss.)

Please make checks payable to "Bellwood Preschool." Tuition/fee checks may be sent with your child in their correspondence envelope or mailed to Bellwood Preschool, 2359 W. Ingomar Road, Pittsburgh PA 15237. If you are paying for something additional (lunch, T-shirts, etc.) in one check, please include a note with your check itemizing each amount or use the monthly payment slips provided.

## HEALTH POLICY

### Illnesses

Your child should be kept home from school, or will be sent home from school, if he/she has any of the following symptoms:

- (1) Temperature of 100°F or more;
- (2) Vomiting or diarrhea;
- (3) Persistent cough or thick nasal drainage; or
- (4) Conjunctivitis (pink eye).

Your child will be sent home from school if they appear ill even when the above symptoms are not evident. It is not necessary to call the school if your child is out sick for a day; however, **please call the Bellwood office at 412-366-3812 if your child will be absent for more than one day.**

### Communicable/Infectious Disease

The School must be notified as soon as possible if your child has been diagnosed as having any of the following:

- |                                |                         |                                  |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| (1) encephalitis               | (10) chickenpox         | (19) ringworm                    |
| (2) food poisoning             | (11) diarrheal disease  | (20) scarlet fever               |
| (3) hepatitis                  | (12) Fifth disease      | (21) strep throat                |
| (4) measles (9 day)            | (13) impetigo           | (22) mites, scabies, fleas       |
| (5) meningitis                 | (14) influenza          | (23) conjunctivitis              |
| (6) pertussis (whooping cough) | (15) mononucleosis      | (24) coxsackie (hand foot mouth) |
| (7) rubella (German measles)   | (16) mumps              | (25) pinworms                    |
| (8) tetanus                    | (17) pediculosis (lice) | (26) COVID-19                    |
| (9) tuberculosis               | (18) pneumonia          |                                  |

### Injuries/Illnesses Occurring at School

- *Minor Injuries/Illnesses:* In the event that a child sustains a minor injury (e.g., skinned knee, bloody nose, etc.) or complains of a minor illness (e.g., nausea, sore throat, etc.), first aid (such as, ice, rest, antibacterial ointments, etc.) will be administered to your child, if needed, and the School will notify the parent/guardian of the child's condition and/or the circumstances surrounding the injury or illness.
- *Serious Injuries/Illnesses:* In the event that neither parent can be contacted in the case of serious injury or illness, (i.e., an injury or illness that requires immediate medical treatment), Bellwood staff will secure emergency medical treatment for your child. A completed "Emergency Medical Authorization and Hold Harmless" form must be on file for each child attending Bellwood.

### Allergies or Other Health Conditions

If a child is allergic to any food or substance, or has any other health issue (e.g., asthma, diabetes) that teachers need to be aware of, then the parents are required to notify the Director of Bellwood prior to the start of that school year. Also see the Medication Policy in the next section.

### **Medication Policy**

Except as provided below, all prescription and non-prescription medicines must be administered at home, or by the parents or guardians at the school if the medicine must be administered during school hours.

In the event that a child has a known medical condition that may require that medicine be given to the child on an emergency basis (e.g., anaphylactic shock due to an allergic reaction, asthma attack, diabetic-related complications, etc.), the following procedures must be followed:

- (1) The parent or guardian shall assume full responsibility for any medication sent to school.
- (2) The medication is to be in its original pharmacy container.
- (3) The medication must be accompanied by detailed written instructions indicating when the condition merits the administration of the medicine, the dosage to be given, how the medicine is to be given, any side effects of the medicine, and the storage requirements of the medicine. *Such instructions must be signed by the physician prescribing the medicine and must include the physician's address and telephone number.* Sample action plans are available online (e.g., for food allergies, see <https://www.foodallergy.org/life-with-food-allergies/food-allergy-anaphylaxis-emergency-care-plan>). In addition, the instructions must be communicated orally in a meeting with the parents or guardian and all Staff who may have contact with the child.
- (4) The parent or guardian must provide the School with a current list of all other medications the child is taking.
- (5) As soon as it becomes evident that the child will require the medicine, emergency medical personnel will be called.
- (6) The parent or guardian must execute the "Emergency Medicine Authorization and Hold Harmless" form which provides that the School, the Unitarian Universalist Church, their agents or representatives shall not be legally liable for the consequences (such as aggravating the disorder or causing other disorders) of exercising its judgment in whether or not to administer the medication.
- (7) It is the sole responsibility of the parent or guardian to ensure that the medicine is current and has not expired, to communicate any changes in the physician instruction sheet to the School, and to submit a revised and updated instruction sheet to the School.

### **Health Forms and Vaccination Policy**

Bellwood Preschool requires that a student health form be completed and signed by the child's physician and returned for all students no later than September 15<sup>th</sup> of the current school year. The physician's health report must verify a physician visit within one year prior to September 1<sup>st</sup> of the current school year. All vaccinations are to be up to date. If your child is not vaccinated prior to the start of the school, please contact the Director of Bellwood. Failure to return the student health form may result in the child being prohibited from returning to school until the health form is returned.

Please note that Bellwood Preschool requests that all children to be immunized according to the guidelines of the American Academy of Pediatrics, which advises following the immunization schedule provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, available at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/imz/child-adolescent.html>.

## FUNDRAISING/KIDSTUFF SALE

Fundraising is critical to Bellwood's day-to-day functions. Registration fees are used for supplies, and the majority of tuition money is paid out almost immediately to provide staff salaries. Additional funds are needed to pay all other expenses, such as church donation for building use, utilities, building improvements, insurance, equipment purchases, and other daily expenses. The KidStuff Sale generates the majority of the funds needed. We also occasionally offer unique services and experiences that raise funds (e.g., family portraits sessions, spirit wear sales); while these opportunities have had tremendous popularity in the past, they are always optional.

**KidStuff Sale (KSS):** Through significant effort by parent volunteers, the KidStuff Sale is a semi-annual, 4-day event (including setup and breakdown) that provides the majority of Bellwood's fundraising money. The KSS is a consignment sale of gently used children's items run by Bellwood. The sale is open to both Bellwood families and the public to sell items and to shop. To support this effort, each family is required to work a minimum of 1 shift for each sale (2 shifts each year). Because the sale is run entirely by parent volunteers and because the sale generates a significant amount of money for each child, a family may choose to provide a substitute volunteer (i.e., grandparent, nanny, etc.) or donate \$310 in lieu of volunteer hours. If a family chooses to donate the \$310, then the charge can be paid as \$155 in October (Fall KSS) and \$155 in March (Spring KSS).

## DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES

**Drop off:** Please line up in your car along the upper drive that runs in front of the church, stopping where the drive turns toward the Bellwood building. There will be a Bellwood staff member outside (from 9:00 to 9:15 and 12:30 to 12:45) to greet the children at their car and make sure they get into the school building safely. This process helps to get the children in quickly and safely and aids parents who have smaller children in the car.

**Pick up:** When picking up your child, line up in the same manner as for drop off. Display the card with your child's name (provided in September) in your front windshield. A Bellwood staff member will escort the children to their cars. Lunch bunch pick up is from the Large Motor Area of the Bellwood Building at 12:15 PM.

### ***Please remember:***

- Do not pull into the drop-off or pick-up line if you have something to discuss with a teacher; this line is intended to be convenient ***and quick.***
- If you have an issue that you would like to discuss with your child's tracking teacher, please contact them to set up a time to talk. Each of our teachers has a specific task at drop-off and pick-up times that assists in the safety of the children. We are always happy to meet and provide updates on your child, but we want to be able to focus on the discussion, and pick-up and drop-off times do not allow us to do that.
- When in the drop-off line, do not allow your child to leave your vehicle until a teacher is present to escort them into the building.
- If you wish to escort your child to the school, please park in the lower lot and walk up.
- Do not bring your children earlier than 9:00 AM for the AM session and 12:30 PM for the afternoon session. The teachers need the time prior to this for preparation and clean-up from lunch. ***If you arrive earlier than the start time, do not send or walk your child in early; a teacher will come out of the building at the appropriate time to escort the children in.***
- Please be prompt for pick-up at 11:30 for the AM session and 3:00 for the PM session; the teachers often have obligations after the Bellwood day ends.
- Please drive slowly when coming down the church drive and in the parking lots. Please do not be in a hurry to drop off or pick up your child. Some children take more time exiting their car and everyone must exercise patience!
- PLEASE DO NOT PASS IN THE DROP-OFF/PICK-UP LANE.
- ***Please share this information with anyone dropping off or picking up your child (e.g., nannies, grandparents).***



## **RELEASE OF CHILDREN**

Children will not be released to anyone for whom the Bellwood teachers are not aware is the appropriate caregiver for the child. If there is a change to your typical pick-up routine, please send in a note authorizing someone else to pick up your child. The teachers will ask for identification before releasing a student to a caregiver for whom they are not familiar.

## **CLOTHING AND TOYS**

Please mark your child's clothing and any other personal items with their names. We hope you will send your child to school in play clothes. At Bellwood, your child has opportunities to play with many kinds of exciting tools and materials. They may spill paint or get dirty at times. Play clothes will allow freedom of involvement with the many learning experiences provided.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

Bellwood has an Emergency Operations Plan in place to respond to all types of emergencies. Depending on the type of emergency, one of the following protective actions is taken:

- In-place sheltering—Sudden occurrences, weather, or presence of hazardous materials may indicate that taking cover inside the building is the best immediate response.
- Evacuation—Students are evacuated to a safe area of the facility if there is a danger in the area. In the event of evacuation, children will be released only to those authorized for pick up (designated on the "Registration Information and Parent Consent Form" completed prior to the beginning of each school year).
- Modified operation—May include delay/cancellation of normal schedule due to weather or building problems (see next section).

**Please do not call the office telephone line (412-366-3812) in an emergency in order to keep the line free to make emergency calls and relay information. You may call the 412-366-9216 line.**

## **SNOW DAY DELAYS AND SCHEDULE**

Bellwood will follow the same policy as the North Allegheny (NA) School District for the closing or delay of class because of snowy or icy road conditions.

If NA delays the opening of school in the morning because of snowy or icy road conditions, Bellwood's morning session will commence at 11:00 AM and conclude at 12:30 PM. The afternoon session will commence at 1:30 PM and conclude at 3:00 PM. If NA dismisses classes early, please call the school. North Allegheny closing and delay information is announced on KDKA radio, television, and the North Allegheny School District website.

## **LUNCH BUNCH**

Lunch bunch is available to students on Wednesdays beginning in October. Send them with a lunch and drink. Lunch boxes should be marked with their names because of duplicate boxes. Lunch care is \$7.00. PM students coming for lunch should arrive at 11:45 and will have lunch until the start of the PM session. For AM students, the lunch hour begins after the session and ends at 12:15. Please pick up your child from lunch on time to ensure a smooth transition from lunch hour to the PM session. If for some reason you are unable to pick up your child by 12:15 PM, please notify us. Information regarding procedures for sign ups will be provided at the beginning of the school year.

## **NUT-FREE ENVIRONMENT**

Bellwood has declared itself a nut-free school to create a safe and healthy environment for all students. Over the years we have enrolled more and more children who have severe allergies to nuts and nut products. When planning lunches, please do not include nuts in the menu. If nuts are included in your child's lunch, we will remove that item and return it to you at the end of the lunch bunch session.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Bellwood enjoys sharing a child's birthday with a special celebration at school. Advise the teachers of the day you plan to celebrate your child's birthday. Your child will be honored by being presented with an original birthday crown and (if you choose to do so) will pass out a non-edible treat that you send in (send in a few extras) to all the children as they are leaving the building. **Please, no candy or edible treats.** The children enjoy treats such as stickers, rings, etc. If your child's birthday does not fall within the school year, you may establish a "school birthday" on a day of your choice. Another way to celebrate is to donate a book to the school. Your child's handprint will be put in the inside cover to remind us of the special donor.

## **SPECIAL VISITORS ENRICHMENT PROGRAM**

Special monthly programs are booked with various individuals and groups providing special programming for children ages three through six (e.g., Animal Friends, the Pittsburgh Symphony, the Carnegie Science Center). We also have had parents provide special programs on the heart, good dental health, Civil War history, and many other topics. During the last week of school, we plan a picnic for families at a local park.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY**

**Photographs by Bellwood staff:** Photos and videos are taken by Bellwood staff for school projects and activities. However, these photos will not be used for any other use (such as for newspaper articles, our website, or social media sites) without a guardian's permission.

**Photography by parents:** Please note that if another parent takes photos (at events such as the Winter Show or Art Show), Bellwood has no control over sharing of those photographs/videos. *Please be respectful of other parents' children when posting photos on your personal social media accounts.*

**Professional photographs:** Professional individual and class photographs are taken in the fall, with various package options available for purchase.

*Once again, welcome to the Bellwood Preschool family! We hope this information is a useful reference, and we are always available for questions or concerns. We are excited to learn and grow with your child this year!*