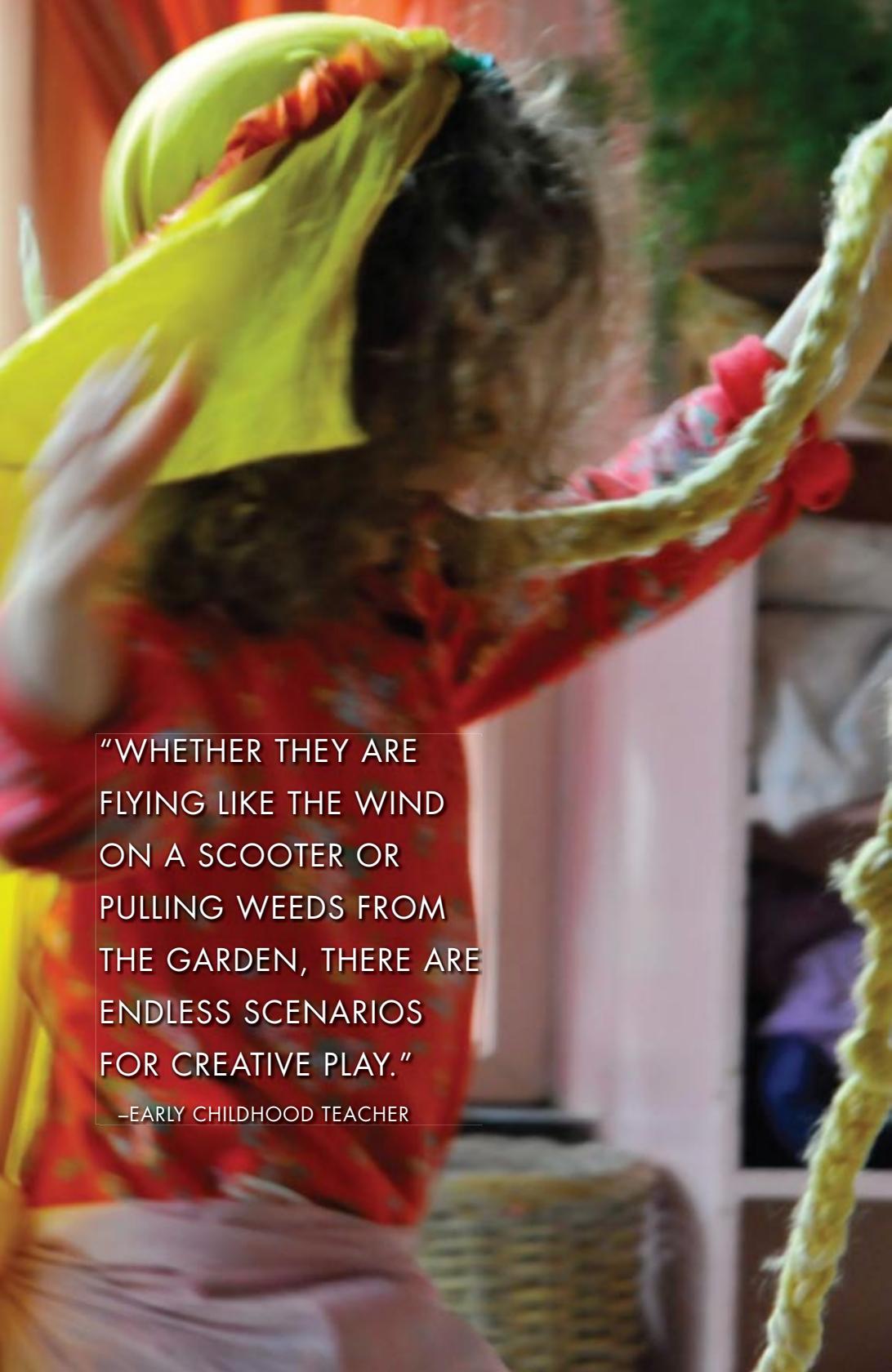




The
WALDORF SCHOOL
of GARDEN CITY

Early Childhood

A child is shown from the chest up, wearing a red patterned shirt. They are holding a large yellow balloon in their right hand and a thick green rope in their left hand. The background is slightly blurred, showing a window and some indoor plants. The overall scene suggests a playful activity.

“WHETHER THEY ARE
FLYING LIKE THE WIND
ON A SCOOTER OR
PULLING WEEDS FROM
THE GARDEN, THERE ARE
ENDLESS SCENARIOS
FOR CREATIVE PLAY.”

—EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER

EARLY CHILDHOOD

The Waldorf School of Garden City's Early Childhood programs include morning nursery and kindergarten classes for children ages 3-6. Afternoon and extended day programs until 6:00PM are available. Within our beautiful classrooms and our expansive outdoor space, children's first experience with school invites them to explore, to move and to imagine. These are the seeds for lifelong learning that develop self-confidence, resilience and future academic excellence.



ARRIVAL

As students arrive at school they are greeted by their teachers and engage in morning chores or imaginative play. Activities such as chopping vegetables, polishing apples, grinding grain or folding napkins, reinforce that they are members of a community. Through participating in the classroom's caretaking, the children come to appreciate the value of real work, learn to collaborate with their peers, increase their independence and derive a feeling of self-satisfaction for a job well done.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Our playgrounds offer a wooded oasis complete with sand boxes, swings and slides, flower beds, a tree house, a small stream, a grassy tunnel and a boat grounded on dry land.

Through their self-directed play and engagement with the natural world, a foundation is provided for scientific observation and tacit knowledge that underlines future scientific pursuits. All of these activities come from their own individual initiative and are consistent with research that supports that children at this stage of development learn best through play, exploration and imitation.



“This past Tuesday the children and I came upon a tall apple tree and they were delighted to gather their yield of fallen apples. On Wednesday we took our harvest, and scrubbed it clean, in preparation for the making of crab apple jelly. Over the course of several days, the class will cook the apples, pour the jelly into mason jars and give them as gifts to their families. A small amount will be kept in the classroom for our weekly snack at school.”



—EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER

Students take weekly walks on the Waldorf School of Garden City’s Nature Trail, where they are able to observe the changes of the seasons and witness the many creatures that live there.

Through regular exposure to the natural world, reverence for life in all forms is gently nurtured. From sledding down a hill, climbing through a tunnel or balancing on a fallen tree limb, opportunities abound for healthy fun. Experiences like collecting apples from our trees and making crab apple jelly connect students to the earth in a personal and meaningful way.

CIRCLE TIME

Children in our Early Childhood programs experience learning in the context of the rhythms and activities of the day. There is a strong connection between the development of a healthy sense of word, or language concept, with a strong foundation in a child’s sense of movement and balance. Morning circle activities include movement, recitation, singing and dramatic play. The intonation, gestures and expression of the teacher in the telling of these stories, all support the burgeoning vocabulary, and attention span of the children. Children in the Kindergarten classrooms are exposed to French and Eurythmy (movement art) through weekly classes with the Lower School teachers—providing a taste of what is to come.



SNACK

Children are actively engaged in the preparation of snacks by washing and chopping vegetables, baking bread and setting the table. When snack is done, children take turns washing, rinsing and drying dishes, bowls and cups for the entire class.

Children in our Early Childhood program are “helpers” and see themselves and what they do as important to others—thereby enabling them to notice and appreciate how what others do affects them. This then sows the seeds for our Lower School curriculum which promotes the development and the acceptance of the “other”, regardless of cultural, religious, or class differences.

SAMPLE MENU:

Monday: black beans and brown rice

Tuesday: oatmeal porridge with milk, raisins and cinnamon

Wednesday: cheddar cheese and whole-grain pretzels

Thursday: corn chips dipped in yogurt mixed with agave and vanilla

Friday: freshly baked bread with crab apple jelly, butter and honey

INDOOR PLAY

Our classrooms are filled with toys made from natural materials such as wooden blocks, silks and items gathered from the outdoors. These open-ended objects stimulate the children’s imagination and build both fine and gross motor skills. Several studies point to creative play as a powerful tool that allows children not only to discover new skills, but helps them to integrate daily experience and express emotion in a healthy and productive manner.

“In one corner a puppet show may spontaneous come together. After the puppeteers are chosen, the stage begins to be readied. Silks are layered to create meadows, rivers, mountains and fields. Stones are gathered and ropes are selected to form gates and paths. All of the children are invited to take their seats as the puppet show begins.”

—EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER



Artistic activities such as sewing, watercolor painting, beeswax modeling, and seasonal crafts are incorporated into the week. Children's involvement with the practical arts helps to build patience, attention to detail, and manual dexterity. Finger knitting and simple felting projects are offered throughout the year. Students learn to work independently, and build critical thinking and problem solving skills.



Parents who visit the Waldorf School of Garden City notice both the simplicity and the deep attention to detail that permeates our program. Our classrooms are artistically crafted, our rich materials carefully selected, and the experiences with which are children are engaged with are authentic.

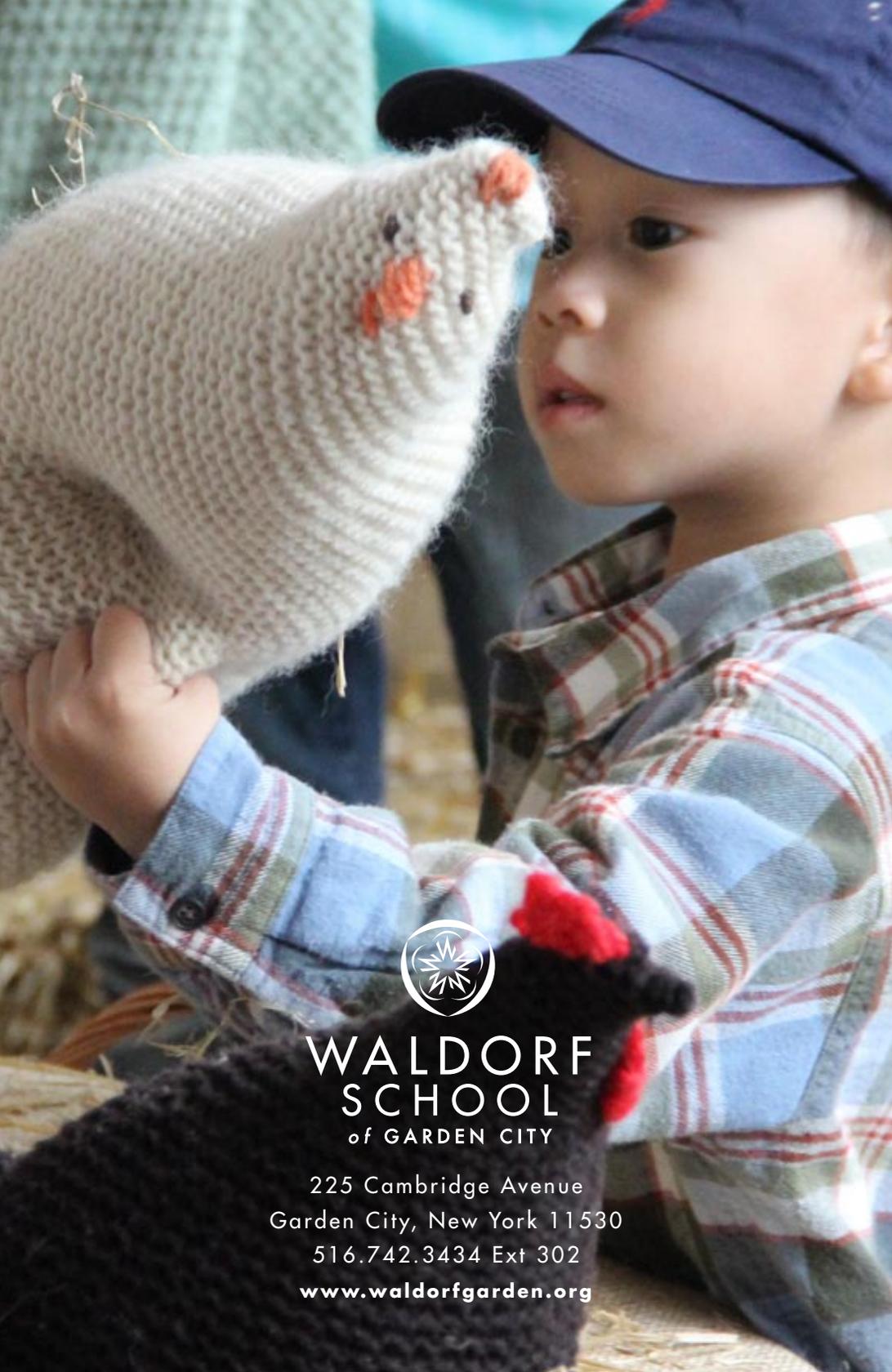
—EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER

VISITING AND APPLYING

Choosing a school is an important decision and a campus visit is one of the most important steps in making the right choice. Most of our families tell us that when they visited our school, learned more about our pedagogy, met our faculty, and experienced our community spirit, they knew they had found their school.

The Waldorf School of Garden City has established an online application process to help families request information and manage the application process.

Please visit www.waldorfgarden.org/admissions for more information.



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of GARDEN CITY

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