

The St Michael Steiner School

NEWSLETTER

8th October 2010

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What's Happening in the Classrooms?

Dates for Your Diary

OCTOBER

Sat 9 Association meeting
CANCELLED

Sat 16 'A MORNING IN THE
CLASSROOM'
9.30-12.30

Thur 21 School ends for half
term 12.30/3.00

Fri 22 Staff INSET (no
school)

NOVEMBER

Mon 1 School starts 8.15am

Sat 6 Parents' workday
9.30-12.30 (TBC)

Fri 12 Martinmas lantern
walk (KG to Class 3)

Mon 29 Advent spiral (KG)

DECEMBER

Wed 3 Upper School talk
with Tony Andrews
7-8.30pm

Sat 4 Open Day 9.30 -12.30

Thur 16 End of term festival
11-1

Fri 17 Term ends for all
classes 12.30pm

In Class 1 we have been getting to know each other and learning about what we can and cannot do in class and at school. Some times this can be a bit difficult to remember, but most of the time we manage quite well. Most of us have made our own skipping ropes which we will use in class soon and some of us have embarked on new adventures. During the first 3 weeks we concentrated on our forms and were delighted to find out that everything in this world is made up of straight lines and curves. Once we felt confident with a few forms we started exploring the world of letters. That's what we have been doing for the last 2 weeks and soon we will be learning to write (very exciting!!), and when we learn to write, we might also learn to read. Our favourite times of the day are play time (of course) and story time. We have explored many different kingdoms so far and are very curious to find out how Jessica and Noah are going to cure Gradnmother from the Ice Queen's evil mirror specks. For Michaelmas, we spent all morning sanding our desks and we were so busy with that, that we didn't even have time to polish them until the next day. We love making soup on Wednesdays and making it for all the big children on Michaelmas was a very special treat. Class 1 would like to say a special thank you to Birgit Moller (mother of Thomas Chok, CI 4&5) for so carefully and lovingly making our crayon rolls. They are very beautiful and we love having them. Thank you Birgit.

Class 4&5 did a lot of walking during the first four weeks of term, learning to orientate themselves in space and time in their first geography block. We focussed on the immediate area, learning about the significance of the position of West Hill - a high point at the junction of two rivers; the importance of the 'hardest worked river in the world', the Wandle; and the part the river Thames played in Britain's extraordinary rise to power and prosperity in the 19th century. In the last week we have turned from geography ("earth drawing") to geometry ("earth measuring"). We talked about how everything in the visible, touchable, audible world can be measured; we have learned that the lines we draw have to be as fine as possible because, in fact, they should be invisible; the children have been challenged to make their own "circle drawing instruments", without any instructions, out of string, pins, blu-tack and bamboo skewers plus a few herrings (red), and now that they really understand how a pair of compasses works, they will get one and discover the circle's amazing secret relationship with the number six (*I know you're reading this, but I'm not telling you until Monday!*)

Class 6&7 have begun the year learning about European Geography. They have drawn physical maps with mountain ranges, main rivers, and seas, and have also drawn political maps marking out and labeling the different countries of Europe and their capitals. Projects were assigned and each member of the class wrote up and presented a country to their classmates at the end of September. After they had a working knowledge of Europe, we took up the threads of history from the Fall of the Roman Empire where we dropped them at the end of last year and then treaded carefully through the so-called Dark Ages, our way lit by such luminous figures as Alfred the Great and Charlemagne. Now in the midst of a Maths main lesson, the class are reviewing their understanding of calculating profits and losses as a percentage of the buying price. Before half-term, they will learn about calculating simple interest.

From The Early Years

New Training available for Parents/Carers

We warmly recommend "The First Three Years of Life" course which is about to begin in London at Steiner House. The course consists of ten one-day workshops held once a month over 10 months. Each day consists of a particular theme presented by an Early Years teacher, singing and craft work. There is also a sharing of seasonal songs and stories and simple puppetry. Lunch is taken together. Although the whole course constitutes an introductory background training for those involved in Steiner Parent and Child group work, each day is complete in itself. The following is an extract from the course programme:

"The Critical First Three Years

The first three years in a child's life are crucial ones. We know now that it is a time when life foundations are laid not only physically but also mentally, emotionally and spiritually. The incarnation of the spiritual individuality with its unique gifts has its own timing – in the first three years there is an unfolding that moves from a complete identification with the world to a conscious recognition of separateness and a self (the "I"). In the first three years the child naturally learns to walk, to speak and to think. Through imitation and play, creativity and free thought are born. Through loving respectful care the ability to trust and love others and life is given. With these incredible early orientations and achievements we truly embrace our humanity. These are all sacred steps which we as parents and carers need to nurture in each and every child. It is a time of critical complexity in the western world. We as parents and carers need to be very clear about what the natural and healthy needs of our children are and how we can protect our very young from the excesses of our fast, and increasingly technological lives. For the hope of the world, we need individuals who are whole, free, caring and sensitive towards others and the earth we depend on."

People from our school community have been able to combine this course with doing a free Childminding course from the Local Authority. They have then been qualified to work as childminders, working out of the insights of Rudolf Steiner. We can act as a centre for those childminders in their work in our community, offering additional practical courses and support. Many people with young children are looking for part-time child minders who will continue to work out of the same philosophy that can be found in our Early Years. For further details of the course please telephone Sam Greshoff on 01227 733668. The first session is on 16th October.

Thank you to Parents

Thank you for your contributions of fruit and vegetables each week. Our snack time menu for this term has changed a little from last year. The children really enjoy their snacks, particularly as they regularly help to prepare the fruits and vegetables, and those who are new to our foods will often start trying 'gnomey' portions. Our menus are displayed on the Early Years notice board in the hallway.

Michaelmas in the kindergarten

Today, we baked Dragon Bread for our Michaelmas festival tomorrow. In our baking story, we heard how heavenly gifts of sun-gold and starlight are transformed into strength and power through the cycle of the farming year of ploughing, sowing and harvesting, threshing, grinding and baking. Our dragon loaves represent these transformed qualities and, as we heard, "each slice that is cut in friendship will warm our hearts, and each slice that is eaten will give us strength and power to overcome the dragon". This story brings together our Harvest and Michaelmas festivals, and we will enjoy sharing the nourishing bread we have all helped to make.

*Earth who gives to us this food
Sun and Stars who make it ripe and good
Dear Earth, dear Sun and Stars,
We will remember what you have done.*

Finally, we would like to welcome Jacob and his family to Katie's kindergarten, and Soren and his family to Leigha's kindergarten.

*Katie Sharrock
For the Early Years team*

UPPER SCHOOL TALK

On Wednesday 3rd December, from 7pm to 8.30pm, Tony Andrews from Ringwood Waldorf School will be coming to talk with parents and teachers about the setting up of the Upper School there last year. We have asked him to share his thoughts and experiences with us and answer questions in this, the first of a series of conversations and talks with Upper School teachers from various schools, planned for the coming months, as we anticipate the opening of our own Upper School in 2012. All parents and interested friends are very welcome.

The Management Team meets approximately every two weeks to monitor and co-ordinate the School Support Teams. If Support Team members have items for our meetings, please put them in the box in reception or email them to Jin Yee Lim at j.lim@liminaires.co.uk

Amanda Bell
On behalf of the Management Team

FREE SCHOOLS UPDATE

The search for new premises for the school continues. If you see any empty or available buildings, let Katie or me know. We will pass the information on to Lara Newman, our contact at 'Partnership for Schools', and she will investigate for us.

Amanda Bell
For the College

FROM THE PARENTS' HANDBOOK:

School Support Teams

Some of the work of running the school is delegated by the College to smaller groups and individuals as needed, for example, finance, fundraising, publicity & communications, craft, social and outreach, maintenance and premises.

Each group is made up of parents and sometimes friends of the school and includes at least one teacher. Where necessary, professionals are engaged, for example, accountants and solicitors, but otherwise, these tasks are unpaid.

Parents are encouraged to become involved in the school in this way, but must have been at the school for at least a term and, in some cases, a year before becoming team members. If you are interested in joining a team, contact Andrea and she will put you in touch with the relevant person.

Support Team members are responsible to the Management Team and should have a written plan for the work the team intends to do during the year, which can be agreed by the Management Team.

Association Meeting Cancelled

The College has decided to cancel the Association meeting that was planned for this Saturday 9th October.

The Association AGM will take place on Saturday 12th March.

A New Face

The College has appointed a project manager for the Upper School.

Richard Holden was a Class Teacher at Brighton Steiner School for 8 years. He also taught in the newly established Upper school there. Since leaving the Brighton school in July, as well as taking on this task with us, he has been appointed a SWSF advisor.

Richard will be around mainly on Fridays - he's the self-styled Rembrandt lookalike.

Outstanding Fees - please pay now!

Fee invoices may be paid either:

- 1 Annually in advance by September 10th or:
- 2 Termly by the first day of each term or:
- 3 By regular monthly Standing Order commencing in September with financial commitment to be met in full not later than the following August 1st.

Cheques should be made payable to:
The St Michael Steiner School Ltd.

Information for BACS payments:

Account name:
THE ST MICHAEL STEINER SCHOOL LTD.
Account number: 65098413
Bank: THE CO-OPERATIVE BANK
Sort code: 08-92-99

Please quote your family name as a reference so that we can identify your payment.

The Social and Outreach Group

Michaelmas Offering

Over the past years we have contributed fresh fruit and vegetables and home baked food for a harvest basket which has been donated to our local Salvation Army branch. This is used for their Sunday lunch club and to provide packed lunches for homeless and vulnerable people. This year the manager Richard Baggaley has requested that we donate packaged food to be distributed in the same way.

If you would like to contribute, there will be a collection basket in the reception area from Monday 11th October until Thursday 21st when our older children will deliver it to the Salvation Army shop.

Meeting

The Social and Outreach Group will be meeting at School between 1.00pm and 2.00 pm on Wednesday 13th October. New members are most welcome. At present most members are working away within the Advent Fair Group, helping to organise the event and meeting weekly to make crafts to sell at the fair. All welcome. Please contact Sarah Woods for details of the craft group and Mel Salam and Alison Stephens to help with the Fair.

Leigha Hipkin.

A MORNING IN THE CLASSROOM

SATURDAY 16TH OCTOBER 9.30 - 12.30

PROGRAMME

9.30 - 10.30 Choose between:

"A Kindergarten morning" with the Kindergarten teachers
and

"Rhythms in Steiner Education" with Edwin Ladaga

10.30 - 11.00 Coffee

11.00 - 12.00 Choose between:

"Games lessons in Steiner schools" with Brian Jacques
and

"From Writing to Reading in Class 1" with Lara Koppers

12.00 - 12.30

Questions and Answers with all participants

"A Morning in the Classroom" is a workshop for adults only.

Places are limited and must be booked at the school reception desk,
by phone on 020 8870 0500 or by email at info@stmichaelsteinerschool.co.uk
There is no charge, but donations towards our expenses will be accepted gratefully.

ACCOMMODATION NEEDED

Occasionally we have students, advisors, therapists or speakers, who do not live in London, come to our school. Often we need to find a place for them to stay for the night so that they can join us for our early starts. If you have a room available and are happy to have lodgers there from time to time for mostly one night at a time, and with plenty notice, please let us know.

Education News Clippings

The Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship office sends out regular media clippings about education issues to anyone who is interested. Some of them are controversial and not all of them are complimentary about Steiner education, but we're all grown up aren't we? So if you are interested and not scared of a little criticism, email Jasmin at forjasmin@googlemail.com and she will forward them to you.

Community Page

Please note that the school does not endorse or recommend, either in general or in particular, anything offered in the Community Pages and parents are advised to check the qualifications of practitioners or people offering services here.

WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR CHILD TO HAVE A HOT SCHOOL LUNCH?

Every week and until half term I will be offering a hot meal for the children and staff every Thursday lunch time. The food will be organic as far as possible and I will be charging £4 for a main course and dessert. I will be at the school each Monday at break time so that I can take orders and payment for meals in advance. I am offering this at first for a limited time as a trial, but if it's popular, I would like to offer it on more days and through the winter. Feedback so far includes "The best cake I've ever had!" "Superb!" and "So yummy!"

Stella Bell Ottewill

'DEEP PEACE OF THE RUNNING WAVE'

Saturday 23rd October 2010, 11am - 4pm

A day of song & movement, themed around a Celtic blessing (song, and its elements of earth, water, fire and air. We will take these elements and relate them to systems & structures within the body.

Then using visualisation, improvised movement and Eurhythmy we will embody & express their contrasting qualities, to discover a new depth, potency & life within the song.

Venue: St Richards Church, Ashburnham Rd, Ham, TW10

Cost per workshop: £65 (concessions: £50 - or by negotiation)

Bookings: To book a place, please send a non-refundable deposit of £25, along with your contact details (cheques payable to D. Rosenboom) to: D. Rosenboom, 33 Upper Close, Forest Row, E. Sussex, RH18 5DS NB Deposits need to reach Delia BY 14TH OCTOBER PLEASE!

Enquiries: Tel: 01342 825031

Or visit www.deliarosenboom.co.uk

New Steiner School opening in Cragg Vale, near Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire

We have run a kindergarten in this beautiful valley for nine years. This week we have bought our building, the old Sunday School at St John's Church, Cragg Vale, HX7 5TF. Next September (2011) we will be opening our first class 1, and we will then be adding another class each year up to age 11, and later 14. We have just submitted an application for Free School Status.

We currently have places available in our two Kindergartens and there are places for six-year-olds from September. We have Open Days every term, the next one is Wednesday 20th October, but you are welcome to arrange a visit at another time.

If you would like to find out more about our school have a look at our website <http://www.hebdensteiner.com/index.php> For more information about Hebden Bridge and the surrounding area see our local community website <http://www.hebdenbridge.co.uk/news/index.html>

Would you like to see this newsletter in colour and detail?

This Newsletter - as well as back issues and all future issues - is available in full colour on our website at

www.stmichaelsteiner.wandsworth.sch.uk

Newsletter Contributions

The next newsletter will be distributed on Friday 12th November. Deadline for contributions is 6pm Wednesday 10th November

We are always keen to publish contributions from parents in the newsletter. If you have something interesting/funny/controversial/moving/profound to share, however small, please send it to me.

Email please, to: amandabell@mac.com