

## **St Michael Steiner School**

### **Assessment Procedures in the Early Years**

Assessment is an important part of good educational practice and related to long-term, medium and short-term planning. The assessment methods and criteria should reflect the philosophy and educational approach of the Steiner Waldorf approach to education. Good teaching practice occurs when the self-reflective teacher also regularly appraises and assesses his/her own teaching as well as the progress of each individual child, supported and affirmed by a strong collegial circle which is committed to quality education. Assessment highlights clarity or its lack in every aspect of teaching practise.

At our kindergarten, regular assessment of each child's healthy and age appropriate development rests upon the following procedures;

#### **Application Form**

On entry to the kindergarten parents and their children are invited to school to meet the teachers and look around the kindergarten. Any concerns are discussed, and questions answered. If the child has been at a previous nursery, we may ask to contact that setting for a brief report. Any additional notes are written and forms the basis of the child's records throughout their time in the kindergarten.

#### **Shared Observation:**

The teachers and other staff will do this daily or weekly as required. A Child Profile is kept with ongoing observations in the form of brief post-it-notes, Learning Journeys, as well as photos, drawings, some activities and parental contributions.

#### **On-going dialogue with Parents**

We aim to develop a warm yet professional relationship with the parents of our children. Our Early Years Parents Handbook is updated each year to provide parents with information about the school. Information about our ethos and philosophy is given through regular meetings with the parents, through Parents Evenings, workshops for parents including 'day in the classroom' once a term. We also provide regular talks on subjects to do with our educational principles, workshops and craft evenings. We welcome families to participate in our festivals, and a class representative is appointed each year to help coordinate parental activities.

Communication with parents will then continue:

- a) Informally at the end of each session when necessary.
- b) In a more structured setting at the termly parent evenings where general child development will be shared.
- c) Meeting with individual parents by arrangement:
- d) Home visits at the invitation of parents.

## **Child Study**

A more detailed study is undertaken of individual children where the teachers feel a child needs extra support and understanding. This is acknowledged to be the core of child-assessment in a Waldorf Steiner Kindergarten. Child Studies are carried out by teachers and shared in pedagogical meetings on a weekly basis. Currently, child studies are presented to the whole school faculty meeting of all 'big' kindergarten, enabling all the school teachers to become familiar with the big kindergarten children.

## **Special Educational Needs:**

Our Special Educational Needs Policy acknowledges the need for extra specialised assessment and SEN support for certain children. We are able to draw on the support of our Eurythmy Therapist, the school's anthroposophical Doctor, as well as access the support of Hounslow Early Years team.

## **Assessments:**

We prepare a brief summative assessment for our new, youngest children after their first term in kindergarten and invite parental input to that review.

Twice a year (Christmas and summer) we complete an on-going assessment form in line with the EYFS and the Steiner Waldorf early childhood curriculum for every child.

This is available for use in discussion with parents at interview and at the end of the school year.

Written reviews are prepared for parents at the end of the school year for those children who have turned five during the year.

Final reviews are prepared for parents at the end of the kindergarten journey for those children who are leaving to go up to Class 1.

## **Early Years Foundation Stage Profile**

The St Michael Steiner School has exemptions from undertaking this profile assessment.

## **Entering the Lower School**

Parents are invited to apply for their child to enter Class 1 during the spring term of the year when their child turns six years. We do not have a cut-off date, and all children who turn six before 31 August are considered, although July and August birthdays often remain in kindergarten a further year. Applications are considered by a team including our school Doctor, eurythmist, and kindergarten and class teachers. This team will inform our decisions making, in conjunction with discussions with parents.