

Anthroposophy

Steiner Waldorf Education comes out of an Anthroposophical understanding of the human being. This lies at the heart of our work and guides it. Members of the teaching faculties belong to the Pedagogical Section of the School of Spiritual Science and contribute to the ongoing development of Waldorf education internationally.

The Steiner Waldorf Movement

The school is a full member of the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship (SWSF) in the UK, which belongs to the European Council for Steiner Waldorf Education (ECSWE) and is part of the wider, international Steiner Waldorf schools movement. A member of College is a director of the London Waldorf Teacher Training Seminar. The school hosts teacher training students for observation and teaching practice. The teaching Faculties organise professional development opportunities, including conferences, workshops, lectures and INSET days. (See list of extra-curricular activities)

Trustees

The school is a registered charity and, as such, must have a majority who are not employees of the school. In addition to the requirements of the Charity Commission, bodies inspecting on behalf of the DfE expect the trustee group to be comprised of people who have relevant experience and skills and who take responsibility for the governance of various areas of the school, for example, Safeguarding, Early Years and Health and Safety. The trustees are ultimately responsible for the governance of the school, but they delegate the leadership, decision-making and day-to day running of the school to the College, who act on their behalf and are accountable to them. Trustees receive the agenda and minutes of the weekly College meeting, and ratify College decisions before they are enacted. Trustees are bound by the regulations and obligations laid down by the Charity Commission. Trustees are chosen by the College because they can contribute to the wellbeing of the school in some way out of their knowledge and experience. The school's Articles of Association require that there are always at least three trustees, but in practice there are usually more.

The School Association

Members of the school Association include parents, friends, staff and trustees. The Trustees and the College report to the parent body and wider community on all aspects of the school at the Association meetings. Trustees are proposed, appointed and retired according to the Memorandum and Articles of Association and the company accounts are presented at the AGM.

Anthroposophical Practitioners

Activities that have Anthroposophy as their source can contribute to the life of the school. The conventionally and anthroposophically trained School Doctor visits once a term to see individual children at the request of teachers and also in the summer term to assess the potential rising Class 1 children for school readiness. Sometimes she is accompanied by a second doctor who specialises in behavioural and learning difficulties. The doctors recommend actions and therapies, most of which can be carried out by the teachers, but sometimes trained therapists are called on. The school employs a Eurythmy therapist who is also part of the teaching faculty.

Official bodies and outside agencies

The school is a company limited by Guarantee and a registered charity, so has a relationship with Companies House and the Charity Commission. It is a full member of the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship and is inspected by the School Inspection Service (SIS). The school also liaises with the local council (Hounslow), Social Services and the Dept. for Education as required. These and other official bodies and outside agencies communicate with the school via the Administrator, the College Chair, the Safeguarding Officers, SEND co-ordinators and others as required.

The College

- The school has no Head Teacher but is led and managed by teachers and administrative staff working as 'The College'.
- The College is made up of staff members who have usually been at the school for more than a year and who are able to make a deeper commitment to, and take responsibility for, the leadership and management of the school.
- Membership is by invitation from current College members.
- Meetings are chaired by a member of the group; a new Chair is chosen periodically, by the group.
- The College:
 - oversees the general wellbeing of the school, ensuring that the aims and vision are kept in mind and reflected in practice.
 - oversees and is responsible for monitoring all aspects of the education offered by the school, including the quality of planning and teaching, mentoring, professional development, student placements and teacher training placements. (see separate policy documents)
 - oversees and is responsible for monitoring all aspects of the administration, management and day-to day operation of the school. (see separate policy documents)
 - oversees and deals with, in consultation with the Trustees, through designated members who have responsibility for particular areas, legal and statutory matters and those concerning the school's relationship with official bodies. (see separate policy documents)
 - is the point of contact for parents who have questions, comments or requests for 'the school'.
 - meets every week during term time and on INSET days.
 - invites faculty members, trustees, advisors and other visitors to attend meetings from time to time or on request.
 - reports to the teaching Faculties, Administration, Trustees and the School Association/parents any decision/information that is relevant to them.
 - holds a 2/3-day College 'retreat' every summer during which the visions and aims of the school are reviewed and re-confirmed.
- Changes to College membership are communicated to parents via the school newsletter and at Association meetings.
- The minutes of Early Years, Lower School and High School meetings are sent to College every week.
- Chairs of faculty meetings are College members and answer questions arising from the minutes weekly.
- The Financial Manager reports to College monthly.
- College members with designated areas of responsibility report to College monthly.
- The Bursar/Administrator reports from the Administration dept. weekly.
- The Trustees meet with College termly as a minimum, receive the minutes of all College meetings and ratify College decisions.
- The Bursar/Administrator is a member of College and is the overall co-ordinator of all actions decided.

Teaching Faculty

The teaching in the school is organised in four areas: Early Years (0 - 6/7), Lower School (6/7 - 11), Middle School (12 - 14) and High School (15 - 18). Some staff teach in more than one part of the school and this provides a link between the areas. The whole teaching faculty meets monthly to do a Child Study together. As far as possible, staff are employed full-time. This gives them a feeling of belonging to the school, and of being responsible for it. Staff for whom full-time contracts are not possible are employed on a pro-rata basis, so that they are at school for whole days, rather than just for their lessons. This means they can provide cover, break time supervision and generally be involved in the life of the school.

Early Years Faculty

The Early Years faculty consists of Kindergarten teachers and assistants and Parent and Child group leaders, at least one of whom is also a member of College and reports to College any significant decisions that are made, developments, plans and any events or activities that take place or are planned. The Early Years faculty meets weekly and makes decisions about all matters relating to children under Class 1 age. Minutes of meetings are distributed to all faculty members and to the College.

Lower and Middle School Faculty

The Lower and Middle School Faculty consists of all teachers who work with children in Classes 1 - 8, at least one of whom is also a member of College and reports to College any significant decisions that are made, developments, plans and any events or activities that take place or are planned. The Lower and Middle School Faculty meets weekly and makes decisions about all matters relating to children in Classes 1 - 8. Minutes of meetings are distributed to all faculty members and to the College.

High School Faculty

The High School Faculty consists of all teachers who work with children in Classes 9 - 12, at least one of whom is also a member of College and reports to College any significant decisions that are made, development, plans and any events or activities that take place or are planned. The High School Faculty meets weekly and makes decisions about all matters relating to children in Classes 9 - 12. Minutes of meetings are distributed to all faculty members and to the College. High School teachers also teach in the Lower and Middle School and so are also members of the Lower and Middle School Faculty. This provides a strong link between these areas of the school.

Administration & Finance Dept.

The Administration and Finance dept. consists of the Bursar/Administrator, the Finance Manager and the Receptionist. They work closely together on a daily basis and discuss administrative, financial and communications issues, as well as relationships with official and regulatory bodies and service providers. The Bursar/Administrator attends College meetings, takes the minutes and is the co-ordinator of all information that needs to circulate in the school. She ensures that there is a designated person who takes responsibility for every action decided by the College and follows them up. The Financial Manager reports to College monthly, in person and provides written reports in advance.

Leadership, Management & Governance Structure

The St Michael Steiner School

→ Denotes lines of responsibility with regard to leadership and management of the school from/to

Organisations of the Steiner Waldorf Movement:
Waldorf teacher training courses, SWSF, ECSWE, SEDT, other schools.

Anthroposophy including Waldorf Education

Anthroposophical practitioners: School Doctor, therapists

School Association:
Parents and friends, staff and trustees.
Meets termly

Administration & Finance dept.

Decides and manages matters relating to administration, finance, premises and communications.

College

Overall responsibility for the school, as delegated by the trustees, leadership and management of the school.
Meets weekly

Early Years Faculty
Decides and manages matters relating to Kindergartens and Parent & Child groups,
Meets weekly

Lower & Middle School Faculty

Decides and manages matters relating to Classes 1 - 8. Meets weekly

Teaching Faculty

Trustees
Responsible for the governance of the school. Meet termly

Official bodies & outside agencies:
SIS, DfE, Local Authority, Companies House, Charity Commission, Auditors, etc.