



The St Michael Steiner School

NEWSLETTER

13th December 2013

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Dates for Your Diary

DECEMBER

Sat 14 - ADVENT FAIR

Tue 17 - Festival Day (short day)

Wed 18 - END OF TERM

JANUARY

Tue 7 - STAFF INSET (no school)

Wed 8 - BACK TO SCHOOL

Sat 25 - Open Day

FEBRUARY

Thur 13 - END FOR HALF TERM

Mon 24 - BACK TO SCHOOL

MARCH

Sat 1 - Open Day

APRIL

Thur 3 - Festival Day (short day)

Fri 4 - END OF TERM

Tue 29 - BACK TO SCHOOL

Eurythmy in Class 8: How Lucky We Are!

I felt it might be interesting to write a little about what was happening in eurythmy this year

As you know the school has decided to pioneer the ISSC here in the UK and we are all very excited about it, for the school as well as for the youngsters.

This has brought about a change in some areas, notably in eurythmy. From now on we will be doing eurythmy in blocks as a main lesson from class 8 upwards. Though this is daunting not only to the children and myself, it is also a very exciting time as it means exploring unknown territory.

So that said, I have now started a new block with class 8 and I gave them a choice between doing a short eurythmy play or the planets. They chose to do the planets and so we embark around the 7 main planets exploring them through dances made around the mood and character of each one.

The most wonderful thing about this, and this is what reminds me how blessed we are indeed as a system, is that we can't just stick any piece of music to suit and fit the chosen dance, we have to find something really suitable. So who else but Matthew, our wonderful pianist, to step in. This is now a new venture for him too, and unexplored territory too.

So Matthew is now sitting in the classes as we move our new forms with the planets in mind, improvising and composing along the way as we move, so that in the end we will have this whole cosmic event taking place in music and movement in the class, thanks to Matthew's composition and the youngsters.

I look forward to sharing the outcome of this cosmic affair with you all at a later stage.

- Michèle Hunter

News from the Early Years

Thanksgiving was our last 'autumn' festival this year and happily it fell on Thursday, our 'outside' morning. We had saved the last pumpkin from our pumpkin patch for Thanksgiving Soup and it boiled and bubbled merrily over the open fire during the morning, whilst we collected its seeds for next year's planting. Earlier in the week, we learnt how to draw 'turkey hands', with brightly-coloured feather fingers, and these decorated the fence as our soup cooked and we prepared our feast.

After thanking mother earth and father sun, we shared the delicious, creamy soup with corn bread and pumpkin pie, kindly given by parents. Later, we heard how the first settlers were given food and shelter by the native Americans when they first arrived in America, helping them through their first long winter. The following autumn, the settlers gave the native Americans the first thanksgiving feast to thank them for their kindness, and together with their new friends they enjoyed feasting, songs and games over three days.

Mother Earth has now given her bounty,
And forest creatures have hidden her harvest
Under piles of leaves,
In nooks of trees,
And deep underground where nobody sees,
To keep safe and warm through the long winter ahead.

In the same way, we held our lanterns bright
Through the autumn night,
But now is a time for an inner light.
As we walk steadily towards that bright candle
In the centre of the advent spiral,
This is the light that we may hold within,
Giving us strength to keep warm, yet awake,
Through the long winter ahead.

We sadly say goodbye to Ivan and his family, whilst welcoming Sienna and her family to our kindergarten. I would like to thank our inspector, Martin, for his kindly words during his visit last week, and for the dedicated work of everyone in the early years team.

Winter is dark, yet each tiny spark,
Lights up the way to Christmas Day.
Come little light and show us the way,
To the bright light of Christmas Day.



Our Parent and Child Groups celebrated Advent with table top spirals.

*"In the Advent Garden dark the night below,
Earth is waiting, waiting, waiting,
For the stars to glow"*

And finally, a very merry Christmas to all the kindergarten children and families, see you next year!

- Katie Sharrock

A Festival Of Light

The Early Years team have begun an 'open house' programme for local families with young children, providing an opportunity for them to experience our festivals in a workshop style environment on Saturday afternoons.

The first of these took place last Saturday with a Lantern Festival. We were delighted that 16 children age 2-8, plus their parents and relations, came to participate - over 32 in all, some familiar faces and many new ones. We began outside with autumn leaf crafts, and kept warm around the fire whilst peeling sticks and cooking delicious bread dampers.

Moving inside, glass jar lanterns were decorated and paper lanterns cut, whilst others played in the kindergarten home corner. After tidying up, we sang our lantern songs before sharing warm soup, bread, popcorn and tangerines.

Following a simple yet beautiful puppet show of the story of Father Sun's Last Rays, we lit our lanterns in the gathering dusk.



We slowly walked around the school grounds following a lantern-lit pathway, culminating in songs around the pine trees in the centre of the lawn. By now it was quite dark, and the garden felt like a magical place, lit by our glowing lanterns.

This festival originates from France where St. Martin is perhaps best known for giving half his cloak to a beggar outside the city of Amiens. The following night Christ appeared to Martin, dressed in the piece of cloak that Martin had given away and said: "Martin has covered me with this garment." (See our previous newsletter for further information). It is one of many festivals of light that happen at this time of year amongst different cultures, including Hanukka, Diwali, and St Lucia. In this spirit, all gathered around our lantern-lit trees were given packets of two flapjacks, one to eat and one to share, as they walked home, lighting up the dark streets with their lanterns.

We look forward to our next 'open house', when we will be celebrating Advent on Saturday 21st December.

To book, please ring school on 020 8893 1299.

Elmfield Steiner School Wins Top Independent School Award

One of our fellow UK Steiner Schools, Elmfield in Stourbridge, has won the award for Top Independent School. We would like to offer our colleagues there our warmest congratulations. If you would like to read more about this, please visit [the Stourbridge News website](#).

Costumes for Class 8 Play

Students in Class 8 are now rehearsing their play, to be performed at Rudolf Steiner House on 28th February.

We are looking for costumes and props, including 1930s dresses, jackets, hats and jewellery.

If you have anything you could lend us, please let me know: amandabell@mac.com

German Waldorf Pupil Seeking Room at the Inn

A German Waldorf pupil from Kassel would very much like to come to London for 14 days in the New Year and is looking for a family to stay with (she will pay for accommodation).

She is 17 years old and hoping to improve her English.

Please contact *Brian Jacques* if you would like more information.

Chair Going Spare?

We in the Administration Department are seeking an office chair. Does anyone have a spare they would like to donate to the school?

Email us:
info@stmichaelsteiner.hounslow.sch.uk

Many thanks,
Deborah, Andrea, & Stella

Photography At End of Term Festivals

Dear Parents,

As the year draws to a close and our End of Term Festival is almost upon us, we would like to remind you all that **photography is NOT allowed at festivals**.

Full details of our Festival next Tuesday (17th December) will be emailed out as soon as everything is confirmed.

We look forward to seeing you there!

- The College of Teachers

Just a brief note to let all parents know that, as per regulations, our Policies Folder is available to read by request at reception.

- Stella Ottewill

Newsletter Contributions

If you have attended a workshop or parents' evening that you particularly enjoyed or your child has come home enthusiastic about something he/she has done at school, why not write a short article about it for the newsletter? The next one will be published and distributed on Friday 17th January and the deadline for contributions is Sunday 12th November.

Email them please to: info@stmichaelsteiner.hounslow.sch.uk

Community Section

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.

Our special Xmas flavour is reminiscent of a mince pie but coated in chocolate and filled with raw spicy delicacies and of course the xmas coloured superfood, goji berries. With our bright red ribbon and gifty packaging, they are ideal little xmas gifts!!!"



Xmas Spice
Casama Chilli
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