



The St Michael Steiner School

Hanworth Park, Park Road, London TW13 6PN

12th June, 2015

Park Road, Hanworth Park, London TW13 6PN

Email: info@stmichaelsteiner.hounslow.sch.uk

Website: www.stmichaelsteiner.hounslow.sch.uk

Dates for Your Diary

JUNE

Sat 13 — Summer Fair

Sat 20 — 11am-2pm Open Day

Wed 24 — 9.30am-12noon Open House

JULY

Wed 8 — St John's Festival

Thu 9 — END OF SCHOOL YEAR

SEPTEMBER

Mon 7 — INSET DAY (no school)

Tue 8 — INSET DAY (no school)

Wed 9 — Start of the School Year

OCTOBER

Thu 22 — School Ends for Half-Term

Fri 23 — INSET DAY (no school)

AN OPPORTUNITY TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE ST MICHAEL HIGH SCHOOL AND THE STEINER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE

Most of you will have heard of the Steiner School Certificate (SSC), a High School qualification developed in New Zealand and currently being offered at four schools in the UK, including ours. Although the SSC is valid by law for university entrance, we have been asked many times about how it compares with GCSEs and A-Levels, the assumption often being that the state qualifications are the gold standard and that we want to offer something else because it's easier or even perhaps because we are subversive by nature! None of these assumptions is true - state qualifications are not 'gold', SSC is not easier and we are not *arbitrarily* subversive - but we can see that the real value of this qualification is difficult to appreciate without an adjustment in the way we are accustomed to thinking about assessment and education generally.

The GCSE and A-Level system works on the basis of a prescribed syllabus which has been designed to include, in theory, everything that all children should know by the time they leave school. The students are then tested to make sure they have learned it. The fact that they all learn the same things within each subject area makes it easy to assess their relative attainment, from which grades are then decided. There is really no other reason - no *educational* reason at all - for everyone to learn the same things, and this has only happened since the introduction of the National Curriculum in the 1970s. We have become used to thinking about education and assessment in this way - that it dictates and ensures what the students learn and

measures and ranks them against each other by using the same syllabus in all schools.

The Steiner School Certificate offers an entirely different approach. It starts from the premise that the education of any group of students is the responsibility of their teachers and their schools; that the curriculum is their business and can and should be flexible and diverse, depending on the students, the school, the location, the teachers, the times etc. In the process of development of the SSC, skills and capacities were identified, such as describing, explaining, analysing, making an argument, crafting an essay, documenting and articulating the development of an idea, reasoning, organising, public speaking, listening, observing, relating, researching, etc. etc., in relation to the stages of development we can observe in adolescence. These skills can be demonstrated through the curriculum that has been worked out by the teachers in each school for their students and it is these skills that are assessed, in many different ways, including through written work, presentations, interviews, practical and artistic work, debates, performances, demonstrations and tests.

The certificate requires that all students study a broad curriculum throughout the High School; there are core subjects at each level which all students must pass in order to get their certificate. In expressing their interests and wishes, the students are also involved in determining what the curriculum will look like in any given year.

A system like this requires good, dedicated, qualified and trained Waldorf teachers, ongoing professional development, advice and support as well as monitoring of quality; without them, the certificate would have no objective value. The curriculum and assessment tasks we set and the marking of students' work are moderated both internally and externally, but, although SSC is subject to rigorous quality control and management from New Zealand, it doesn't start from the assumption that we won't know what to teach unless they tell us; it starts by assuming that, since we are responsible, qualified professionals who care about our students' wellbeing, we will be able to take responsibility for our work. By its very nature, SSC demands that teachers work together in developing a balanced and inspiring curriculum, setting clear assessment tasks at the right level, supporting each other and the students, giving and receiving constructive criticism where needed and generally being conscientious about what we do. This devolution of responsibility to professionals in their field

is a very modern way of working; it encourages initiative and creativity and demands the ability to explain and justify our actions. All of these are qualities we also try to develop in our students, whereas education policy in the UK is still moving in the opposite direction.

Many of the essential skills assessed through SSC are also assessment criteria at GCSE and A-Level; the important difference is that the SSC does not prescribe the curriculum, and that it recognises what we in Waldorf Education understand as the evolution of consciousness, and takes this into account in what it asks of students at each level. This is vitally important for us because the whole basis of our education is that children/students *gradually develop* the ability to experience, think and understand concepts and ideas, so it matters that what teach them is related to their stage of development. This in turn means that their education is not simply a random sequence of topics that someone has decided must be learned. Instead, it can be designed to develop qualities and capacities in the students at certain times; their own development can be the focus around which their education is formed. The fact that so many GCSE and A-Level students now have tutors to 'prepare them' for the exams should make us question whether what is being assessed is really relevant for the students.

All of this is really just to open a conversation with you.

With this in mind, we would like to invite you to **an exhibition and presentation about our work with SSC on Wednesday 8th July, after the St. John's Festival, from 1:00pm - 2:30pm on the ground floor of the main house.** There will be information about the certificate and quality assurance, examples of assessment criteria and tasks, students' work and the students and teachers themselves to answer your questions.

- AMANDA BELL

The St Michael Steiner School
Park Road, Hanworth Park, London
TW13 6PN

Summer Fair

Saturday 13th June 2015
11am - 4pm

**Delicious Home-made Food and Cakes,
Scrumptious Ice Cream,
Tombola, Raffle, Live Music,
Books, Toys and Art Supplies,
Children's Craft Activities and Traditional
Games**

Entrance: Children 50p, Adults £1

www.stmichaelsteiner.hounslow.sch.uk Tel 020 8893 1299

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NEWS FROM THE EARLY YEARS



Plenty of collaborative work outdoors.

Meanwhile, the older children all want to finish their horses so they can enjoy a gallop around the garden!

We said goodbye to Tayo and his family at half term and wish them all the very best for their future. We warmly welcome Chase, her older sister and family to our school.

The coming weeks include the Kindergarten Social Evening on Thursday, 25th June at 7pm. We hope all Early Years parents will be able to attend this enjoyable evening.

We open our doors to the local community again on Saturday 20th June from 2-4pm when we hold a Summer Festival of Light following our Open Day. Please see poster in this newsletter and tell your neighbours and friends about the festival, suitable for children up to the age of nine.

We look forward to seeing you at our forthcoming Summer Fair, and at our end of term events - we will be in touch with further details.

With best wishes from the Early Years Team.

If you have something you would like to contribute to the Newsletter - maybe you would like to write something about a school event, or maybe you have been to an interesting talk outside the school, or perhaps you have a selection of photos! - send your contributions to admin@stmichaelsteiner.hounslow.sch.uk The deadline for the next newsletter is Monday 29th June.

The St Michael Steiner School

invites you to join us in the
Woodland Garden for our

Summer Festival of Light

Saturday 20th June 2pm to 4pm

Crafts, cooking on the fire
and St John's Festival celebrations
(for children and families not currently enrolled in our school)

Suitable for up
to 9-year olds

£10 per family
(concessions available)
booking essential

You may like to make a day of it and join us for
our Open Day from 11-2pm

The St Michael Steiner School, Park Road, Hanworth, London TW13 6PN
tel: 020 8893 1299 email: info@stmichaelsteiner.hounslow.sch.uk



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We warmly invite you and family and friends to the WELEDA WELLBEING SCHOOL FUNDRAISER EVENT

12.30-2.00pm, Friday 26th June 2015, in the Parent and Child Room.

Weleda Adviser Nisha Jani will give an introductory talk around the philosophy of the Company and focus on the award winning skin ranges. She will answer general questions and be able to advise on individual concerns.

There will be the opportunity to browse, try out and purchase the products. Information will also be available about other Weleda Ranges such as the Mother and Baby Range and the Spa Range.

Brochures can be found in the School reception and Kindergarten lobby so that you can pre- order any products if you are unable to attend on the day.

Nisha will kindly donate 15% of all takings to the School Bursary Fund.

A Creche will be available in the Kindergarten Garden from 12.30 until 1.30 pm

- Leigha Hipkin

National Children's Day 2015

The St Michael Steiner School celebrated National Children's Day 2015 on Saturday 9th May with an afternoon of free play in our woodland garden. More than seventy people with children from birth to nine years of age came and enjoyed an afternoon of play, relaxation and enjoyment. Children made caterpillars and butterflies and flew them around the garden on wooden sticks, whilst parents helped build a fire in our outdoor barbecue, collecting wood from around the garden.



Once the fire burning well, we cooked masses of popping corn in a big pot, whilst families explored our school gardens, picnicing under trees and following pathways through the bluebell woods. We ended the day with laughter, dancing and singing around the maypole!

Thank you to all who came and enjoyed our play afternoon, and for your generous donations towards our school funds.

We look forward to seeing you all again soon.
Leigha, Katie and Jeannette, for the Early Years team

Lou Harvey-Zahra: Steiner parenting educator with a difference... She doesn't expect us to be perfect !

On Saturday 6th June, quite a few of us gathered to attend a talk with Lou Harvey-Zahra in the eurythmy room while Katie, Leigha and Jeannette looked after the children. Lou is an experienced, down-to-earth mother, parent educator, Steiner teacher and special needs support specialist. She shared with us about creative discipline, rhythm and play.

I have attended many talks and workshops on these subjects over the past few years but this one really clicked with me. I think because of Lou's sense of humour and her understanding of what it's really like day-to-day in the reality of parenting.

I have left many of those talks thinking "eek, I'm getting it all wrong!" But not this time. Lou happily shared her 'unconscious' parenting moments with us as well as lots of genuinely helpful, practical and easy-to-adopt ideas for more connection, rhythm and compassion in our parenting.

I have ordered both her books and would totally recommend them to anyone who needs a bit of inspiration and reconnection. You can sign up for her newsletter and find out more at www.skiptomylouparenting.com

Hollie Holden

'A gentle approach to early years education with a small group of mixed age children in a home-like environment'



The Children's Garden

A Steiner Waldorf kindergarten for children between the ages of 3 and 7

OPEN DAYS

Monday 11th May 2015, 3 – 5pm
Saturday 3rd October 2015, 11am – 1pm

Grove Gardens Chapel
Lower Grove Road
Richmond
TW10 6HP



PARENT AND CHILD GROUP
(birth to 3 1/2)
Wednesdays, 2.30pm to 4.15pm
Booking compulsory



www.facebook.com/TheChildrensGardenRichmond

Enquiries
reginecharriere@yahoo.co.uk
www.thechildrensgarden.org.uk

NEWS FROM CLASS FOUR



Class Four's journey through the school year is coming to an end all too quickly, time seems to be running away! but hopefully many of the memories will stay with the children for some time to come. Some of our journey has been bumpy, as one would expect, with the burgeoning ten year old's sense of self being met by the tales from the Norse Myths and the polar opposites of heat and cold, good and bad. One of the highlights of this year was the creation and performance of our class play 'The Slaying of Fafnir' in which the children excelled themselves and truly worked as a team.

Another highlight was our visit to the London Ragged Museum as part of our history main lesson. The children experienced a lesson as it would have been in 1890's. A truly terrifying experience which gave them food for thought! Not least the experience of writing with a slate pencil on a slate board, the knuckle brace for fiddlers! and the back brace for fidgeters! The lesson was superbly led/acted by the teacher Miss Perkins and her trusty CANE! which, fortunately she did not use. All was resolved when after the lesson, as the children were sitting stiffly and in absolute silence awaiting the entrance of Doctor Barnado, Miss Perkins revealed her true self by removing her wig and glasses, putting the cane down and speaking in a warm voice. All sighed with relief. It has to be said that during the lesson she tried to catch the children out with many questions and several tongue twisters but alas she could not! Try saying " a fine silk sash should not show shabby stitches" quickly whilst being tense and fearful. She was amazed at the class's delivery.

In maths the times tables and the four processes continue to be part of the lesson but we have now discovered fractions! The joys of sharing and swapping various fruits, cake, bread and jelly worms aided this tricky concept but most have now grasped and are beginning to be able to execute the more abstract number work of fractions.

The class has resumed the swimming sessions and it has been truly wonderful to see how each child has grown in skills and confidence since last year. The class is now using the large pool without any fear and several of the children are diving as well as jumping into the pool. Archie has developed a really beautiful butterfly stroke and Casey showed us a remarkable forward flip into the water. Fun and friendship are enjoyed by all.

In the last few weeks of this year we are studying local geography and discovering the area around our school. This block is supported by a bush craft camp where the children will practice orienteering skills and sleep under the stars in hammocks. We also plan many local trips to support map making skills and finish off with a trip up the River Thames to London seeing how the landscape changes from green to urban, counting the bridges and experiencing the heart of our city.

So far it has been a wonderful year with a lovely group of children. We have welcomed Casey Kaplan into the class and sadly we will be saying goodbye to Keene Owen who is going back to live in America. He will be attending a Steiner School over there and we hope he will keep in touch with us.



We have welcomed Mrs Harrison into the class as the learning support assistant and are delighted to have her.

- Pat Alexander

CALLING ALL ST MICHAEL'S PARENTS

There are two Open Days remaining this term - Saturday 20th June and Wednesday 24th June and I am looking for people to

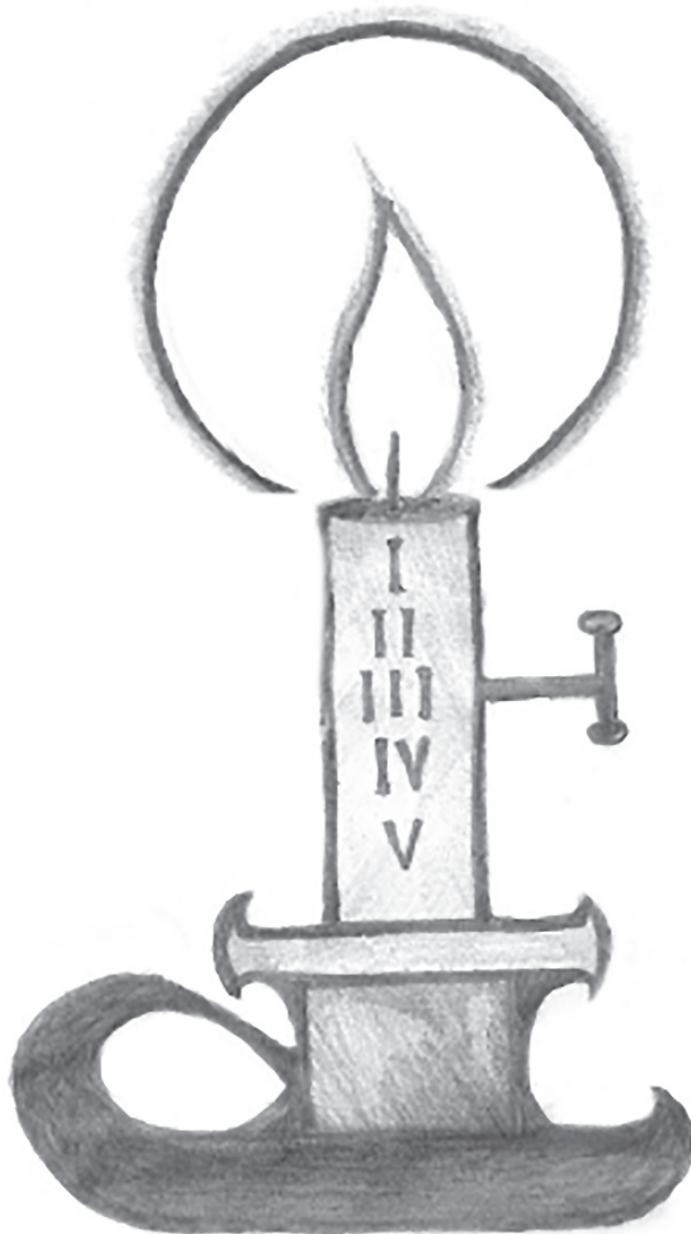
- a) distribute fliers
- b) help out on the day

If you are available on either of these dates, or can put up a poster in your local community, please email me: admin@stmichaelsteiner.hounslow.sch.uk

Thank you so much for your continued support.
- Stella Ottewill

Lifeways 2015

A MEASURE OF TIME



**A summer week with workshops, activities, music and adventure
for men, women and children**

Emerson College Sunday 26 July - Saturday 1 August

COMMUNITY PAGES

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.

A family based in Hampton is looking for a Steiner trained or inspired child carer, beginning October. The child is just over 1 year old. Preferred German speaker but not essential. Please contact Leigha (or Yan @ [07736346334](tel:07736346334)) for more details.

Childminders

If you are a registered childminder or would like to do the free local authority training to become one; if you work or would like to work in a Waldorf inspired way, please contact Leigha or Katie. There are parents in the Parent and Child groups who need to return to work outside the home in Spring time. There are also parents in Kindergarten and older classes interested in part time/after school care.

We would be delighted to support you with half termly workshops/mentoring to help create a network of much needed childminders in our Community.

Thank you. - leighahipkin@hotmail.com

French family of 3 children, we would like to host a foreign student, for 2-4 weeks this summer, preferably in July.

We live in a little village close to Alès and Nîmes, in south of France, (parc naturel des Cévennes,) a very nice and sunny mountain country.

Our son, 4 years old, is going to Waldorf school Caminarem in Alès. Both parents speak English and Spanish, I am a former French teacher. We both are artists (working in writing and illustrating, motion pictures and books). In exchange to take care of our son a few hours a day (morning), we will be very happy to pay for everything and give pocket money.

We eat organic food, have internet access but no TV. Nearby are great places to swim, walk, picnic, horse ride, and train station leading to big cities (Nîmes, Alès, Montpellier..) is very close. We have one guest room, our house is big, with a courtyard and a small garden.

All best,
Clara - clarabam@free.fr

Rural cottage in Mallorca (sleeps 6) with swimming pool. 5 mins to village, 15 to 20 mins to mountains and beaches. Contact Graham Kennish <kennish46@gmail.com>

I recently joined the London Wide LETTS Exchange scheme which facilitates skills sharing and exchange through a website and regular meetings. We could take advantage of this scheme to facilitate similar exchange and ideas sharing within our own community.

The details of the LETTS scheme are: London-wide Local Exchange Trading Scheme
• www.londonwide.letslink.org • london@letslink.org • 020-7607-7852

I'm going to set up a website in the next few weeks called www.letslinkhamptonhill.com to facilitate skills sharing and to explore ways in which we could collectively benefit the school through mentoring or sharing ideas and skills. I will have a forum on this website which we can all use just by registering. I invite you to also join both the LETTS scheme and register with the forum on my website so we can begin to form mutually beneficial relationships and thereby benefit the school collectively.

If you do register with the website and scheme please let me know.

Mujeeb Habib - Mujeeb.habib@gmx.com • 07740302691