

The St Michael Steiner School

NEWSLETTER

11th July 2012

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Dates for Your Diary

JULY

Wed 11	8.15 / 8.30am Kindergarten Family Festival 12:30pm TERM ENDS FOR ALL CLASSES
Thur 12	All day Packing up the school
Fri 13	All day Packing up the school
Sat 14	All day Moving the school to Hanworth Park.

AUGUST

During August you will receive your summer mailing with information for the new term. In the meantime, please look at the website for updates.

Tue 28 - Thur 30 Class 9 induction

SEPTEMBER

Mon 3, Tue 4 & Wed 5 Staff INSET

Thur 6 10am TERM STARTS

Sat 22 11am - 2pm Open Day

"One door closes and another opens..."

In March 2001, three Waldorf teachers were looking for a building in which to house a new school. They had been around long enough to know that this would be no easy task, but one of them thought she would just phone Wandsworth council on the off-chance that they had something. The answer was 'yes we do'. It turns out that, when a school is very keen to incarnate, it will all but find its own building.

The next six months were filled with activity and the school opened in the dramatic wake of 9/11, on 12th September 2001, with 5 teachers, 1 assistant, a volunteer receptionist/bursar and 26 children.

It has not always been easy coping with the stairs, having no outdoor space of our own, having to fit ourselves and our curriculum around another school with a very different ethos, but the premises at West Hill gave us the opportunity to establish the school, and this was an invaluable gift at just the right moment.

The school settled and grew until, in November 2011, we were given notice by Wandsworth council that we would 'probably' have to leave in July. It was too much to hope that fate would crown us again without our stir (to misquote Macbeth slightly) but I can only think that the spirit of the school took Katie by the hand as soon as it heard and showed her the place it had found for its second incarnation, because in the same week, she brought us details of the premises at Hanworth Park.

The months since then have not been without their struggles, to say the least, but all's well that ends well.

Now, at the end of its 11th year, the school has 13 teachers (4 of whom were here when the school opened!), 7 assistants, a receptionist and a bursar/administrator and, at the last count, 105 children and several pending applications. There is so much excitement and enthusiasm for what we are offering, that our last three Open Days, held at Hanworth Park, have been the busiest we have ever had. So the future looks as rosy as the garden (will when we've planted some - it's more brambly at the moment).



The Founders: "Hmm. What shall we do next?"

The UK Exam system and Waldorf Education: irreconcilable differences

Over the years, many people in the Waldorf movement have experienced the particular difficulties of establishing an Upper School in London, yet it is still puzzling that there is no full Waldorf school in a capital city with a population of eight million, where the first Waldorf school in the English speaking world was founded in 1925. In Europe, most large cities have three or four full schools, but despite many initiatives, there has been no Upper School in London since 1942, when Michael Hall was evacuated from Streatham to Minehead.

The obstacles we have faced are complex and manifold; they include the cost of premises, the lack of outdoor space and the time it takes to travel even short distances in London, minimising our catchment areas, but perhaps our strongest adversary is the public perception of what Waldorf education is.

In Europe, where Waldorf schools are supported or recognised by the state, parents feel confident that it will provide their children with a good education, to the extent that, not only writers and artists, but politicians and business people send their children there. In the USA, where people are used to paying for education, Waldorf schools stand side by side with other private schools (as do their fees and their teachers' salaries, by the way) and this gives them a certain status.

Although there are Waldorf critics in all of these places, in none of them do the words "My children go to a Waldorf school" provoke the response they do in the UK. "Oh" people say, "isn't that where the kids just play all day?" or "that's for children who can't cope with proper school isn't it?" or "oh, one of those hippy schools" or "Don't you worry that they'll get left behind?" The perception is that Waldorf education doesn't challenge children, that it's for children who have difficulties, that it's only for artistic children, that it's not academic, that it keeps children away from 'real life', that it's not a serious education. Hold up this perception beside the profile of the average middle-class London parent (the only people who can afford to pay school fees, unfortunately), who loves the culture and cosmopolitan life of the city, who works in a high-powered job surrounded by sophisticated technology and wants a bright, exciting future with many opportunities for his/her children, and the incongruity becomes clear.

Of course, this is not a true picture of Waldorf education. Why, then, has it arisen so strongly in the UK? One factor is the nature of mainstream education here and the enormous difference in the way we see education generally. In Europe and America, a broad and diverse curriculum, even at university level, is seen as a positive thing that will give the students more opportunities. In the USA, graduation from High School, having attained a certain level in all subjects, is enough to secure a place at university. In the UK, specialisation begins at 16 with GCSE's, the underlying thought being that, only in that way will students be able to pursue a lifelong career in their chosen field. Because this model earned the British education system a good reputation in the 19th and early 20th centuries, when 'a job for life' was what most people could expect, we are loathe to let go of it. The belief in its efficacy persists even though people's lives, expectations and work patterns have changed beyond recognition and there is more and more evidence that this educational model doesn't work any more. Instead of seeing that something new is needed, politicians blame teachers for 'not doing it right' and continue to try to apply old methods to an entirely new situation.

In Waldorf Education, perhaps because it originated in Europe, the curriculum remains broad throughout; arts students don't give up maths and science at 16, or science students the arts. Because of this, its form is unfamiliar to British people and they find it unsettling. Whereas in other countries it is clear that a rigorous science education is not diminished, but enriched, by the arts, and vice versa, in the UK, there is a common perception that, unless you devote your studies to one subject, you cannot become really good at it. This is reflected in a widespread reliance on experts in minutely specialised fields (because everyone *only* knows about his own field) that pervades every aspect of life in the UK and comes back to reinforce the perceived need for early specialisation in our schools. And so it goes on.

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For many years, Waldorf Upper Schools in the UK have struggled to reconcile the public perception of what secondary education is for with the diverse nature of the Waldorf Upper School curriculum by trying to combine the two. This is a struggle because, in order to guarantee success at GCSE and A-Level, and thereby University entrance, schools have to employ teachers who are experienced and qualified to teach their subjects in that way. Inevitably, the vast majority of these are not Waldorf teachers and have little or no understanding of what Waldorf education is. But schools can't afford to employ other - Waldorf - teachers to teach Main Lessons, so in many cases, they are being taught by the 'exam' teachers, who then often use them to supplement their own courses, because they don't know what the Waldorf curriculum is, can't teach it and, perhaps most significantly, are often not expected to.

To add to the difficulties, the exam system in the UK is becoming more and more prescriptive, so that more and more time is needed to give the students all the information they need to answer the questions in the 'right' way. This means that more of the school day has to be devoted to exam teaching and less is available for the Waldorf curriculum which, already often sidelined or 'tacked on', can be squeezed out without too much opposition. Eurythmy and craft teachers in particular can testify to this. In addition, an exam syllabus typically takes no account of the students' stage of development - something that is central to Waldorf education - and the exam teachers are not in a position to ameliorate, even where it is still possible, the effects on their students of inappropriate subject matter and demands.

Having come to the conclusion that it is not possible to maintain the quality we can offer in the Lower and Middle School if we have to compromise it with GCSEs and A-levels, we began in 2007 to plan our High School without them. The developmental needs of the students were always its foundation. We are asking what we need to provide for 15 -18 year olds so that they will be able to enter a world whose future is uncertain - where anything could happen - and take any path they choose. We want to do as much as we can to help them become versatile, confident, interested, enthusiastic, empathetic, skilful, active and *useful* in the world. Our curriculum reflects this, remaining broad throughout and placing the development of practical and social skills alongside the development of clear thinking and independence together with an immersion in every field of human culture, so that our students step into life with the personal qualities, abilities, appreciation, knowledge and understanding to take their place in the world.

Many people who send their children to Waldorf schools initially because they want a gentle beginning, planning to send them into mainstream when their education gets 'serious', then become convinced of its value in the long term and want to stay. Whether or not this happens depends very much on the quality of the education their children receive in the Kindergarten and Lower School (inspiring teachers and bright, enthusiastic children are our best advertisement), but also on being convinced that, not only will this continue in the Upper School, but their children will then be able to access higher education and work as easily as any other 18-year-old. This is what we want for them too, and a great deal of work is going into finding an appropriate way to demonstrate the value of our curriculum and the calibre of our students, but we can offer no precedent to assure people that this will happen.

This being the case, the parents and students who have committed themselves to the first Class 9 in London for 70 years, are a particularly courageous bunch who are taking a leap of faith. We, the initiators and carriers of The St Michael High School, feel the enormity of the responsibility we have taken on towards these students, their parents, the rest of the school and the future of Waldorf Upper School education in London. We know how important it is that this first cohort of students leaves our school *well-educated* - that they are not at a disadvantage when they take the next step in their lives. We also know that, through them, we have an opportunity, which we must not waste, to begin to change the public perception of Waldorf Education in the UK.

Amanda Bell

From The Early Years

The Story of the Children's Year in the Open Door Community Centre garden.

There was once a beautiful garden in the middle of a very special city. Each day, children came there to play and were looked after by the gardeners. The children grew to know and love one another. Sometimes they were sad but mostly they were very, very happy.

In the beginning there was much work to be done. The children helped the grandfather Tatus, and his grandchild, to bring in the harvest and prepared a grand harvest feast to share.

Mother Earth and the gnomes lived deep in the garden and the boys and girls helped them to gently put the root children to bed. Brother Wind blew and made a leafy carpet, and the children made leaf crowns and flew kites that they had painted. They saw a knight and a lady riding by, and were given shining swords so that they may tame dragons, and fight the good fight as they grew to be adults. With their leafy lanterns, they walked out into the night where Sister Moon shone and the stars twinkled. The woodland creatures peeped out as they walked by and listened to the children singing.

Inside, the boys and girls lit diva lights to show Rama and Sita the way, and made rangoli patterns to decorate their doorways.

The children watched Mary gently walking and carried their lit candles in apples around the winter advent garden and they watched as their spiral of light grew. In a corner of the garden, they found baskets filled with oranges, honey cakes and walnuts and thought that they must surely be gifts from the good St Nicholas. The boys and girls followed the sheep with a curly horn to the stable, and saw him give his wool to be used as a warm blanket for the new-born baby.

On another day they saw the Elves and the Shoemaker busy at their work with scarlet leather and a tick-tack-a-two.

As King Winter walked the land of ice and snow, the children saw Three Kings go riding by, following a Star, off into the distance. They danced with the Snow Maiden, and helped the Woodcutter chop and carry wood, and were invited into his cottage to keep warm. The Moon had her New Year, and the children played special games, and dressed in beautiful clothes from a country far to the East.

Soon it was time for Lady Spring to appear over the hills and bring the flower children with her. The boys and girls planted spring gardens and found little eggs nestling in the grass. Some children thought they were gifts from the Easter Hare.

As the Summer King made his way up to his fiery throne, high in the sky, the children collected wood and helped the fire fairies build a big bonfire. They became brave and jumped over the fire, and their courage grew and grew. Later, the children were amazed when they saw beautiful maidens arise out of Three Oranges.

There were new-born foals in the garden, and the gardeners asked the children to feed and groom them. The foals slowly grew into young horses, and the children prepared a fine stable for them.

Near the garden was an enchanted forest where the children met Rapunzel and her Prince. The boys and girls loved to explore there. When they climbed to the top of the hills where rabbits scampered, they looked out over the special city and sky. There they could see, shining in the distance, a big palace. One day they saw, from a window in the palace, a queen smiling and beckoning. Nearby was a little church and other buildings where people came to the doorways and waved to the children on top of the hill. Far, far, far as the eye could see, Father Sun sparkled on the waves of the sea. Two of the children felt a great longing to travel across the waves in their big blue boats.

Back in the garden, the horses were growing strong and sometimes the children peaked over the wall and knew that soon it would be time for everyone to leave. One day, after Sister Rain had cried all her tears, and Father Sun was peeping from behind a cloud, the gardeners gathered the children around them and told them it was time for them all to go on a journey. The bigger children led their horses out and the gardeners gave each of the younger children a special bag filled with treasures they would need in time to come. Together, the big children rode out, taking all their friends with them into the bright summers day.

Leigha Hipkin and Katie Sharrock

We say a special good bye to Soniya, Alexander, Tamina, Jaewon and Cecilia and their families. We wish you all well and do please keep in touch. We say a very special thank you and goodbye to Joy who has worked with us for ten years, and to Stella, an alumni of our school who has assisted us beautifully over the past year. We wish you both well in your futures. We wish Rebecca a fond farewell and thank her for all the work she has done with us over the past three years. We look forward to hearing how your plans for the future progress.

From Rebecca's Kindergarten



Now the year is at it's end, it's time to say goodbye.
For all the cherished memories so sacred and so dear.
We thank you.

This has been a wonderful year in our kindergarten; to the parents we thank you for your wonderful children and to our colleagues' thank you for all your support.

To Claudia, you have been the rock of the kindergarten this year and I will always be grateful for your kind and gentle support throughout this year.

We are saying farewell to: Theo and his parents Tom and Kate and little brother Griffin, Louis Benne and his parents Lisa and Sebastien and little brother Dylan, Reuben and his parents Sabine and Caspar Linus and his parents Sara and Dante

Love Rebecca and Claudia

What's happening in the Classrooms?

Class 7&8 presented Shakespeare's *Macbeth* last week to parents and friends at Rudolf Steiner House. The class worked hard to prepare for it despite only having one day when the whole cast was present to rehearse. The performance went well and one aspect that I found particularly admirable was the way they handled themselves on stage in front of a live audience when something unexpected happened (such as forgotten lines, speeches said before their time, or untimely entrances). Such situations require tremendous presence and poise in order to decide in that critical moment what is the best course of action. They responded very well and it is these experiences that build strength of character for the future.

The class have also been working since September on individual projects. Their written work was handed in during the month of June, practical parts finished off, and presentations of projects to parents, teachers, and friends took place last night (Monday). It was a very enjoyable and entertaining evening and such a joy to see them share the fruits of their work.

Tonight (Tuesday), will be their graduation ceremony to recognise the culmination of their years being led (well, some of the time!) by their class teacher. Then begins a new phase of increasing independence along with responsibility as they continue to be prepared to stand in the world as a human being of action and initiative, able to contribute to and meet whatever situations arise for them.

All will be going onto our new Class 9 with the exception of Amanda Pelosi, Ellie Mulholland, and Bluebell Beech. We wish them well on their way.

Brian Jacques

The year in **Class 6** ended with a block of English language, with English history as its focus. We read part of 'Song for a Dark Queen' by Rosemary Sutcliff, the story of Boudicca, queen of the Iceni. At one point, with the Roman army advancing on them, Boudicca has to decide whether to try to make an alliance with the 'Red Crests', thereby securing her people's safety, or to join forces with their long-time enemies the Catuvellauni and try to drive the Roman's out of their land, leaving the British tribes with both their dignity and their freedom.

I divided the class into two groups who then had to discuss the two choices. The next 45 minutes saw the classroom filled with debate about freedom, comfort, hatred, cowardice, fear, courage, revenge and many other powerful emotions, culminating, at least for me, in an argument between two children: "Of *course* they should join the Romans, the Romans are much stronger, otherwise they'd all be killed. They'd be stupid not to. Anyone would. Why wouldn't you? What have they got to lose?" to which the other child replied "Are you insane?? They wouldn't be FREE!!" And so begins Class 7, the year of revolutions.

Amanda Bell

Those of you who saw **Class 3&4's** Norse play on one of the 5 occasions when they performed it, may not have realised that the children wrote the words and music for all but one of the songs, the verses they spoke and worked out the choreography themselves. It was the intensive work of three weeks and a real team effort. Well done to everyone.

Edwin Ladaga

This year has been filled with polarities in **Class II**. We have been noisy and calm, mischievous and saintly, strong and weak, mighty and small. The children have swung from one side of the spectrum to the other in no time at all. It has become clear towards the end of the year, that they have moved on from this mood and a calmer mood has started to settle as they get ready for Class III.

Every week for the past two years, we have been venturing out to Wimbledon Common to fulfil our adventures. The children have very much enjoyed climbing trees, exploring and paddling in the water. They have found many dens in the commons and have enjoyed hiding in them.

Last week, the last time we visited the common whilst being in Wandsworth, the boys decided to get together to build a den. The girls watched for a while and then decided they would like to decorate the wonderful den with leaves. It was a perfect ending to a wonderful time that we have had in Class II.

Lara Kuppers

What's happening in the Classrooms?

To our wonderful St Michael's parents,

In an attempt to begin demystifying eurythmy for those of you who are in contact with it but feel distanced by it, I set up an adult class this year. This began with just a couple of you but then grew the following term to a good size group where we were able to explore a lot more between each other. This is most encouraging and I intend to continue this work next year once things are a little clearer with school about what is possible and where. I shall of course let you know early next year. In the meantime, I invite those who are curious to talk with the parents who attended. These are Jin Yee Lim, Leila Steeds, Alice Hartley, Sarah Woods and Tara Osman.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all those who were able to come to see the children in their eurythmy work. I apologise for having so little time to meet you all afterwards as I still had class commitments. I will endeavour to make this more possible next year so that you may ask questions or talk about the children with me. I will be most happy to do so.

The children do wonderful work and they really enjoy the opportunity of showing this to you when you come to watch. It can be a little overwhelming for them especially when it is in a new space where they are not used to being.

Also eurythmy is really working deep into the children's organism and in time truly transforms their inner being. I wish I could convey through words the significance and depth of the work of eurythmy on the children's inner being and the implications for their future.

The best way is still to explore it yourselves in order to understand it more.

With much gratitude to you all for coming and for letting me work with your lovely children, I wish you a most pleasant summer break and look forward to seeing you next year.

Michele

Here are some testimonials from parents:

Eurythmy has always remained a slight mystery to me. I felt I'd never quite grasp it until I tried it. At the boys encouragement, I decided to seize this rare opportunity. I have experienced the practice as firmly grounding. I arrive with my energy moving upwards & outwards and leave with it doing the opposite, rooting me to the earth! It's highlighted the challenge of dancing my own dance, while dancing with others, having my own experience while still relating to and engaging with the group. Emotions are flowing more freely and I feel ever so slightly more alive. For all this, I am so very grateful!

Thank you,

Leila Steeds

My knowledge of eurythmy has been limited to what I have seen at school with the children's performances. On the surface it looks like a free form movement exercise and I'm sure there is plenty of information on the internet but these are what I have experienced in Miss Hunter's class this term.

Eurythmy is a powerful movement exercise that engages with your physical body, mind and spirit. I found many metaphors in the movements with my own personal life such as being resistant to change, feeling centred and focussed and sharing your energy with the universe!!

I always look forward to my eurythmy class and leave feeling more relaxed, balanced and ready to face the day ahead."

Regards

Jin Yee Lim

After a first year of French...

So, here we are, already another year passing by... it goes so fast! Yes, time flies. But the journey has just started.

Class 1 and 2 know a fair amount of various French songs, they can count till 21 and say a few basic things like their name, age, or where they live. Such nice work has been achieved, through a lot of fun! With a rewarding climax when performing "Dans mon pays d'Espagne" or "Il était un petit navire" in front of the parents.

Class 3&4 can count too, and know very well their colours, along with pets or some members of the family. They can understand the physical description of someone. And can amazingly sing the famous traditional folk song from Britany "J'entends le loup, le renard et la belette", even in rounds!

Class 5&6 have achieved a lot throughout the year, without really realizing it. They did an amazing job at working on the recitation of poems, especially one describing a city, a street, and finally a school on which playground birds sing all day long in huge trees. They know by heart a rhyme containing numbers and basic French to introduce oneself.

Class 7&8 have shown nice enthusiasm towards the language. They also achieved a lot and know really well a very nice poem about an encounter in Paris, "la place de la Concorde". I have seen nice drawings inspired by sometimes funny stories told in French. They also really enjoyed a French animation in the Tim Burton style for a song called "Tais-toi mon Coeur" from the French band Dyonisos.

My experience has been tough sometimes, but on the whole really rich. Building a relationship with a class through language lessons is a real challenge, but worth it. I have had amazing times with all the children and am glad to get to know them better every time. I will be happy to pursue that journey from next September.

Emilie Leroux



A Fundraising Epic: The Three Peaks Challenge

It's with some pride and minor disappointment that the Three Peaks Team completed the Three Peaks challenge successfully in 24hrs + 43mins.

All five of us never imagined it would be as difficult and physically demanding as it actually was, but it was an experience we will never forget. Our Team comprised of hikers: Raman Khosla, George Buckley and Didier Delvaux, and drivers Shalu Khosla and Viva Aikins.



We started from the base of Ben Nevis (Scotland's + UK's highest peak) at 6.01pm Saturday 30th June, having spent the previous 12 hours in a combination of planes/ trains and automobiles getting there. The weather was grey with cloud covering the tops of the mountains. Asking descending climbers of the conditions on top we learned that it was very cold, windy and wet. Energy surging we put our heads down and moved on quickly, making good progress as the path climbed steeply, doubling back on itself and rewarding us with our first views of the cloud enveloped peak. Later, as we reached the plateau that holds the stunning Loch Meall, known as the halfway lochan, we noticed the cloud lifting with our ascent. The going now became much rougher with the path a worn route through the boulders and scree, climbing relentlessly in a series of very wide zigzags, passing the Five Finger Gully. The gradient then eased as we reached the, in some places, snow covered summit plateau that resembles a lunar landscape. Legs now aching, bodies tiring we made the final effort for the top, touching the trig point at around 8.50pm. Spending 20 minutes resting, taking photos, eating energy and talking to four hardened Scotsmen determined to sleep on the summit, we then descended. Having planned for a 2hr and 30 min ascent and a 1hr 30min descent we were acutely aware that we were off schedule and that it was getting dark. Unfortunately it took a good 30mins for our legs, minds and bodies to make the adjustment to going downhill. Realising this we made our first major mistake. We decided to jog down the switchbacks. The amount of stress that that placed on our knees would only be noticed later. The rest of the descent went well and we arrived back to our heroines Shalu and Viva at around 11.15pm for some hearty grub and TLC.

Around 11.45 pm Shalu and Viva willed themselves to stay awake and drove, amazingly, for 5 ¼ hrs through the night. I can't even begin to imagine how truly difficult and miserable that leg of the journey must have been for them. The boys, we tried our best to sleep rest and recuperate for the next mountain, Scarfell Pike.

Ben Nevis walk Statistics: Distance: 10.5 miles. Official Guide Time: 7 hours. Team Target Time: 4.25 hours. Actual Time: 5.25 hours. Ascent: 1352m



We arrived at what we thought was the base of the Pike at 5am. Shalu and Viva were asleep on their feet, exhausted and needing to sleep. It was pouring down with rain. The hills and valleys were cloud covered with little visibility. It was now that we paid a heavy price for our folly in jogging down parts of Ben Nevis. George's knee had swollen and he could not bear his weight on it for long. Rather than holding the two of us back George did something very brave and selfless. He decided not to climb, and insisted we carried on without him. Didier and I quickly prepared ourselves and left at around 5.20am, pondering whether we should leave George and deciding that we did not want to let down the good people who had sponsored us. Thankfully, within 15 minutes we were out of breath and could think of little other than our next step as the rain lashed down on us. Soon we joined the main stony path. We asked descending climbers the conditions up top – "horrible" was the unanimous response. Pondering what could be possibly be more horrendous than now we continued. After crossing the swollen river and its slippery stepping-stones the path steepened considerably as it followed the side of Lingmell Gill. This part of the climb was relentless and seemed to go on forever. At last we rounded the top of this section, the mountain opened out and exposed us to the full force of the rain and wind. From this point the going got progressively more difficult as the path makes way to boulder fields that become more and more difficult to clamber over as the lactic acid accumulates in the legs. The summit was deceiving as in order to reach it we needed to go up and down peaks that are very similar in height. Finally at 7.21am we touched the trig - summit. With zero visibility we took a photo, ate some chocolate and headed down. The descent was difficult and very strenuous, with the concentration requiring boulders giving way to the knee jolting steep stone path. Thankfully we made good time, but took a "wrong" turn that led us to a different car park than that which we had left. There was no phone signal so we had to walk along the road back to the car arriving back just after 9am – a very good time. Here our heroines took over, fed us warm food and helped us change out of our sodden clothes.

We set off as quickly as possible, Viva in the driving seat, exhaustedly settling in for the drive to Snowdon. Unfortunately after 5 minutes a small accidental scrape with a taxi lost us some time, Viva was very shocked. First Shalu and then George took over the driving, following the sat-nav. Unfortunately, set on "shortest" rather than "fastest" route it took us through the centre of Liverpool, getting us caught in traffic and bleeding more time. The drive across the North Wales coast line was breathtaking. Minutes ticking away we, realised we would only have 3 hrs to climb Snowdon. George insisted it was possible and that the best route offering us any hope of achieving 24hrs was the Pyg Track - the base Hillary and Tensing used whilst training for their ascent of Mount Everest.

Scafell Pike Walk Statistics: Distance: 6.0 miles. Official Guide Time: 5.5 hours. Team Target Time: 5.0 hours. Actual Time: 4.0 hours. Ascent: 989m



We set off at around 3pm, doing our best to get the blood flowing into our aching legs thus allowing us to move more quickly. After 30 minutes the path became much steeper and rocky, bending left and eventually reaching the style of Bwlch y Moch. From here, one is awarded their first views of the Snowdon Horseshoe. The weather for Snowdon had threatened to be good in the forecasts. It wasn't. The peak was covered in cloud which was descending. Soon we would be climbing in rain again. Continuing along the somewhat hands on path to Cwm Dyli was quite straining. This section was surprisingly difficult, requiring thought and three points of contact especially on the zig-zag section leading up to the finger stone on Bwlch Glas. The views of Llyn Glas below were stunning, calming the nerves. Coming onto the ridge we were exposed, as with the Pike, to the full force of the weather. The last 1/2mile to the summit was covered in cloud, zero viability and with the wind extremely strong. Progress was agonising. Didier was virtually blown over as he reached off balance - into his rucksack for water. After touching the trig at 5pm, taking photo and food, we realised we only had one hour left to descend. I lost us a precious 5 mins fumbling with numb fingers to put on my knee straps (they couldn't bear the strain on their own anymore). Reaching the bottom of the zig-zag section the chocolate, eaten at the summit, kicked in and energy surged allowing us to move very quickly. Could we do it?

We made the decision to descend steeply to the miners track as from there we could try and run the few miles back on flat ground and hopefully give us the best chance to complete the challenge within the 24 hrs. Unfortunately we missed the turn leaving only the Pyg route back. At 6pm we were still a half hour from the bottom. When Didier announced this our energy sapped, and we limped our way to the bottom arriving at 6.43pm. Shalu, Viva and George cheered us at the bottom. We were exhausted and numb. I remember my first words to Shalu were "never again".

Snowdon Walk Statistics: Distance: 7.0 miles. Official Guide Time: 6.5 hours. Team Target Time: 3.0 hours. Actual Time: 3.75 hours. Ascent: 957m

We did this as a team and our sense of humour helped all the way! Each member played their part perfectly. Without that fantastic team spirit this challenge would have been impossible to complete – in the process raising a good sum of money for the school through friends, family and parents help and generosity. The Just Giving page will be active for another two months:

<http://www.justgiving.com/3peaks4stmichaelsteinerschool>

I think the best way to sum up this challenge is that it's something not to be missed, but also never to be repeated. Everybody has been so generous and the encouraging words of support really fuelled and motivated the team.

Thank you.

By Raman

A note about the use of the school's name and Logo

We very much appreciate the fundraising efforts that are going on in the school and want to support them wherever we can. However, please note that, because we are a school and a charity with clearly stated vision and aims, and because we are part of a wider movement that regulates use of the name 'Steiner Waldorf', the school's name and logo must not be used by anyone without express permission from the College. Thank you for your co-operation and understanding.

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.

Newsletter Contributions

The next newsletter will be distributed on Friday 14th September. Deadline for contributions is 6pm Wednesday 12th September. 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

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



Cosy Baa-skets Wool is Pure Natural Wool straight from our flock of Black Welsh Mountain Sheep. The Wool is easy to handle, warm for your plants and we feel the Lanolin in the Wool helps with water retention. Wool is a natural product being Environmentally Friendly, Totally biodegradable, in Harmony with Nature. We find it wonderful for lining Hanging Baskets, Mangers and any other similar plant containers.



For more information you can visit our website: www.ruxhillfarm@btinternet.com
Or contact us direct, where we will be only too happy to hear from you.

Email: ruxhillfarm@btinternet.com

01409-281457 (Shebbear Devon)

HANDMADE NATURAL SOAP AVAILABLE

Lavender

Rose Geranium

Clary Sage and Lemongrass

Orange Geranium

Price: £3 each or two for £5

Please contact Brian Jacques
(Class 7&8 teacher)

07759917112

Dear parents,
should you be interested in:

- French tutoring (children and adults)
- babysitting

then I am the person you are looking for!

Please feel free to email me for details

leroumilie@yahoo.fr

Mlle Leroux

Community Section

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Dear parents of St Michael Steiner School in Wandsworth

We are a German family of 5 all English speakers and have moved from London to French speaking Lausanne in Switzerland in March 2012.

As I am going back to work we are looking for an Au-Pair who would like to live with us and look after our three children (7years, 4 years, and 10 months old). The two oldest ones are attending the Steiner school in Lausanne.

If you and your child would be interested into this, please get in touch. We would love to host a Steiner pupil in our house.

Best wishes,

Anke Wolf
thewolves@mac.com