

The St Michael Steiner School NEWSLETTER

15th November 2010
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Dates for Your Diary

NOVEMBER

- Sat 20 Advent Fair (see poster)
- Thur 25 Craft workshop (see item p4)
- Mon 29 Advent spiral (KG)

DECEMBER

- Wed 1 Upper School talk with Tony Andrews 7-8.30pm (see poster)
- Sat 4 Open Day 9.30 -12.30
- Thur 16 End of term festival 11-1 (see news item p2)
- Fri 17 Term ends for all classes 12.30pm

JANUARY

- Mon 10 Staff INSET (no school)
- Tue 11 School starts 8.15am
- Thur 20 Kindergartens' parents' evening 7-8.30pm
- Tue 25 Class 2&3 parents' evening 7-8.30pm

FEBRUARY

- Tue 1 Class 4&5 + 6&7 parents evening 7-8.30pm
- Sat 5 "A Morning in the Classroom" workshop for parents.

SCHOOL INSPECTION DELAYS NEWSLETTER!

I apologise for the late publication of the newsletter this month but, as you will know, the school was inspected by the Schools' Inspection Service on behalf of OfSTED last week. Four inspectors, including, for the first time, a lay inspector with a background in Steiner Waldorf education, visited classes, talked to teachers, parents and children and scrutinised paperwork for three days. Then, on Thursday we heard their report. It is confidential until publication, but as soon as it is published - in about two weeks' time - there will be a link on the school website and hard copies available on request at reception. In the meantime, we are only allowed to tell you that it went very well and to thank all of you who returned your questionnaires.

Amanda Bell, for the College

THE ST. MICHAEL STEINER SCHOOL
ADVENT FAIR

Entrance £1

Saturday 20TH of November 2010 - 11:30am - 3:30pm
St. Paul's Community Centre - 23 Inner Park Road, London SW19 6ED
Homemade Cafe, Handmade Crafts, Creative Activities for Children, Cakes and Cookies, Children's Books, Storytime and Puppet Shows

The St Michael Steiner School
Contact Details: 020 8870 0500 - info@stmichaelsteinerschool.co.uk - www.stmichaelsteiner.wandsworth.sch.uk
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From The Early Years

WE LOVE OUR FOREST FRIDAYS.

"Outdoors, children's senses find nourishment, the basis on which they later learn abstract theories and respond to the world. Songs, games and stories experienced outside amongst the birds, rustling leaves and creaking branches are unforgettable impressions. The young souls enlivened by cold and heat in frost and sun, cool puddles or hot sand. Interest is awakened in touching wet and dry stones, frozen soil, prickles, rough bark and furry leaves. Equilibrium develops in walking over uneven logs, climbing, paddling, watching clear skies after a storm or experiencing sunrise and sunset "

The above extract is taken from *Under the Sky*, a highly recommended book by Sally Schweizer, which we find ourselves returning to again and again. It is published by Sophia Books and features our children on the cover and in one of the photos inside.

On Friday, one of our parents brought his son to the common for his first Forest Day. Standing surveying our camp, the children gathered around the rope swing, those already in the muddy, water filled ditch with logs and buckets, those striding with inner purpose through the carpet of leaves, triggered a childhood memory. He recalled a time that his class had been taken out for an educational trip. On the journey back, the coach pulled up by woodland and the children were given time to go off and explore. He recognised it as one of the moments of distilled, pure happiness in his life.

FESTIVALS OF LIGHT

We celebrated two such Festivals this week, Diwali and Martinmas

DIWALI

Diwali is here, Diwali is here,
Diva lights show us the way
Diwali is here, Diwali is here
Rama and Sita return home today.

We made clay divas and lit them for our story of Rama and Sita. We heard about the lit up pathway on their journey home after seven years of exile and the happiness of the people when they were crowned the rightful King and Queen.

MARTINMAS

The sunlight fast is dwindling,
My little lamp needs kindling,
Its beam shines far in darkest night,
Dear lantern guide me with your light.

Our story told how our leafy lanterns housed the last of Father Sun's Autumn rays, showing how we can protect the inner flame growing in each of our hearts, through the long dark Winter months ahead.

Our thanks go to Sheetal who helped us plan and prepared our delicious Diwali feast and to parents who baked, and beautifully wrapped our St Martins cloak flapjacks to share at home.

SIS INSPECTION

We would like to acknowledge the positive effect the SIS team had during their three-day visit to our School last week. In particular we wish to thank Martin Bradley the specialist Early Years inspector. His relaxed, professional insightful ways with our children and team of practitioners alike has meant that his input has strengthened us in the work we do with your children and our school. He is truly one of life's enablers.

We are attending our Annual National Early Years Conference at Kings Langley next Saturday. Amanda is giving one of the talks about school readiness from the perspective of the Class Teacher. We will make our notes available to you before the end of term. Sadly this means we will miss our Advent Fair. The preparations look exciting and we wish you all a wonderful day.

Leigha for the Early Childhood team.



End of Term Festival

Instead of the usual sharing of the children's work at the end of term this year, we would like to have a festival of Christmas music, poetry and prose. We know that there are musicians and performers among you, and we would like to invite you to take part.

If you have something to offer, please let me know as soon as you can, so that we can put a programme together. The children and teachers will, of course, also be contributing and all parents are welcome.

The festival will be held from 11.00am to about 12.30pm as usual.

Amanda, for the Lower School teachers

What's Happening in the Classrooms?



Classes 1, 2&3 begin their Martinmas lantern walk on Wimbledon Common last Friday.

In Class 1 we have been looking at the quality of numbers. Did you know that there is only ONE of yourself? And we have so many things that come in twos - our parents are two, our eyes are two and so are our hands. We've heard some great stories and we'll be hearing some more before the time is up.

We've also been really busy with making our lanterns. Our first attempt didn't work so well, so we had to try again and this time it worked much better. AND they are very cool because we made them all ourselves with absolutely no help from any adults.

Our day at the Wimbledon Common was amazing (see picture). We climbed trees, worked hard and built houses all over the common. Next time we might team up together and build one big house. We were also extremely lucky with the fantastic weather.

In the run up to advent we will bring our number block to an end and then carry on with some letters. I know many of us are desperate to get going with the reading, but we must remember that maths is super important and fun too.

Lara Koppers

Class 2&3 have been hearing creation stories from around the world and Class 6&7 have been working with texts from the Arthurian legends.

In Class 4&5, the children are half way through a maths block. As they get older, their backpack of knowledge gets bigger and bigger and sometimes they have to take it off and unpack it to see what they're carrying. This always produces some things they had forgotten were in there, but which look a bit familiar and others that they have NEVER seen before and which *someone else must have put in there!* This is what we have been doing for the last two weeks, and we have found addition, subtraction, multiplication and division in linear and column form, mental arithmetic, fractions, decimals, times tables, factors, prime numbers, perfect numbers, deficient numbers, abundant numbers, linear measurement, weight, volume, time, HCF and LCD. Quite an impressive load when you see it all together. Slowly, with lots of practice which, magically, has become less 'boring' the more of it they do, the children are moving from "I can't remember what to do!" (translation: "I am relying on you to tell me what to do!") to "Oh these! Don't tell me, Don't tell me!" as their confidence and independence grow. There's still some adding of denominators going on (grrr) but less, and we still have two more weeks!

Amanda Bell



FROM THE PARENTS' HANDBOOK:

The School Doctor

The school has an anthroposophical doctor, Dr. Jenny Josephson, who is based in Forest Row in Sussex and visits the school once a term. She sees between 5 and 10 children, (depending on whether she is attending for a whole or half day) chosen by the teachers, on each visit and advises teachers and parents of any help the children may need.

On these visits, she gives advice from an educational point of view and may also prescribe remedies, anthroposophical medicines, pedagogical exercises and therapies to help with many different things from dyslexia to poor eyesight.

Almost all children can be helped in some way and we aim that all children see her at least once while they are at the school.

In the Michaelmas term, Jenny is accompanied by Dr. Francisco, a school doctor who has a great deal of experience working with children and young people in schools and curative homes in Finland.

All children who turn six during the current academic year will see the doctor in the summer term as part of the procedure to determine whether or not they are ready to go into class 1 in September.

You will be notified in writing at least a week before the visit if the teachers would like your child to see the doctor and, except for the 'class 1 readiness' session and the sessions with Dr. Francisco, you should accompany your child during the visit.

Parents' consent for children to see the doctor is given on the general consent form, which parents sign when they join the school.

Please note: Dr Jenny and Dr Francisco will be at school today (Monday 15th) and, because of a mix up in communication, parents were only advised over the weekend. We apologise for this. Parents do not need to accompany their children on this visit.

SCHOOL SUPPORT TEAMS

THE SOCIAL AND OUTREACH TEAM

We are working alongside the Advent Fair Group preparing for next Saturdays event. Please join in helping us make this a special day.

THE CRAFT GROUP

We are still busy making gifts to sell at the fair. Thursday Mornings at Sarah Woods home.

THURSDAY 25TH NOVEMBER

STAR TRANSPARENCY WINDOW DECORATION

WORKSHOP LED BY JUANNA LADAGA

LEARN HOW TO MAKE THESE BEAUTIFUL DECORATIONS

TO BRING LIGHT AND COLOUR TO OUR SCHOOL AND

HOMES FOR ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS

ALL WELCOME BOOK THROUGH SCHOOL SMALL COST

FOR EXTRA MATERIALS

THE MAINTENANCE TEAM

Thank you to parents and staff who gave up last Saturday morning with their families in order to take part in our scheduled workday. A lot was achieved in a short space of time. There is some ongoing work, which includes finishing painting the children's toilets and the woodwork in the stairwell. Please contact Mark Morris who facilitates this group if you can either become part of the group or help out with particular jobs. These can be done after school between 4 o'clock and 6 o'clock, Saturday mornings or during the School holidays.

The Management Team meets approximately every two weeks to monitor and co-ordinate the School Support Teams. If Support Team members have items for our meetings, please put them in the box in reception or email them to Jin Yee Lim at j.lim@liminaires.co.uk

ACCOMMODATION FOR VISITORS

Occasionally we have students, advisors, therapists or speakers, who do not live in London, come to our school. Often we need to find a place for them to stay for the night so that they can join us for our early starts. If you have a room available and are happy to have lodgers there from time to time for mostly one night at a time, and with plenty of notice, please let us know.

FREE SCHOOLS UPDATE

The search for new premises for the school continues. If you see any empty or available buildings, let Katie or me know. We will pass the information on to Lara Newman, our contact at 'Partnership for Schools', and she will investigate for us.

Amanda Bell, for the College

Outstanding Fees - please pay now!

Fee invoices may be paid either:

- 1 Annually in advance by September 10th or:
- 2 Termly by the first day of each term or:
- 3 By regular monthly Standing Order commencing in September with financial commitment to be met in full not later than the following August 1st.

Cheques should be made payable to:
The St Michael Steiner School Ltd.

Information for BACS payments:

Account name:
THE ST MICHAEL STEINER SCHOOL LTD.
Account number: 65098413
Bank: THE CO-OPERATIVE BANK
Sort code: 08-92-99

Please quote your family name as a reference so that we can identify your payment.

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.

Would you like to see this newsletter in colour and detail?

This Newsletter - as well as back issues - is available in full colour on our website at www.stmichaelsteiner.wandsworth.sch.uk

Newsletter Contributions

The next newsletter will be distributed on Friday 10th December. Deadline for contributions is 6pm Wednesday 8th December. 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 Page

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.

WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR CHILD TO HAVE A HOT SCHOOL LUNCH?

Every week and until half term I will be offering a hot meal for the children and staff every Thursday lunch time. The food will be organic as far as possible and I will be charging £4 for a main course and dessert. I will be at the school each Monday at break time so that I can take orders and payment for meals in advance. I am offering this at first for a limited time as a trial, but if it's popular, I would like to offer it on more days and through the winter. Feedback so far includes "The best cake I've ever had!" "Superb!" and "So yummy!"

Stella Bell Ottewill

Mother seeking nanny/ mother's help in putney for two little boys, two or three mornings/afternoons a week. Times and days flexible.

Steiner training/ knowledge preferred.
Please call Tamasine on 07505 229074

Family Homeopathy

Looking after all of you

Homeopathy is a wonderful therapy for many common ailments and it may help all members of the family, starting with infants, babies, school age children, adolescents and adults.

Homeopathy may help in a variety of ailments such as acute infections of ear-nose-throat, chest and urinary tract, but also in more chronic conditions such as eczema, asthma, hay fever, hormonal issues, anxiety and depression.

In particular, homeopathy has great value in improving the immune system making it stronger and more resilient as the child grows up into a robust adult.

As a homeopath and nutritionist I have the ability to assess a situation and help in many ways. I have been practicing for several years and have helped many children and adults.

My practice is located in Wimbledon Village with easy access and free parking provided for. Please feel free to contact me for further information.

Maria Jevtic BSc (hons) LCHE, RSHom, DNTh

Homeopath and Nutritionist

email: maria@jevtics.net

tel: 020 8946 8526

www.familyhomeopathy.co.uk

Ansel's Cards

I am 16 years old & recently finished my education at The Pheonix Stables project in York & before that 9 years at Botton Vllage school. My aim now is to go to the Mojave desert in California to do an apprenticeship at the California Institute for earth art & architecture.

Cal earth is a not for profit centre teaching the art of sustainable and affordable eco building to people from all walks of life.

They work in disaster areas to empower people to rebuild their homes and communities using simple techniques and local materials.

My travel costs, visa and training will come to several thousand pounds.

To cover these costs and to support the work of Cal earth in Haiti I have produced a range of greetings cards printed in vegetable based inks on recycled card. I hope you will buy your greetings cards and Christmas cards from me whenever you need any to help me to get to Cal Earth and to help Cal earth with their work in Haiti.

My web site is www.forestgalleries.com and to see the lovely buildings at Cal earth go to www.calearth.org

Cards are normally £1.20 each but you can order 20 mixed Christmas or Autumnal cards for £14.99 inc. of p&p if you email us at darrells@hotmail.co.uk or call 01751 472327

Thank you very much.

Ansel Darrell



TAKING THE PLUNGE: STARTING AN UPPER SCHOOL

A Conversation with Tony Andrews

Tony Andrews established the Upper School planning group at Ringwood Waldorf School in 2001, after working there as a Class Teacher for 14 years. He now teaches in the Upper School which opened in September 2009. As we look forward to the opening of an Upper School in London, we have invited him to come and talk to parents and teachers about his experience, the context, the vision and how it all came together. All welcome.

WEDNESDAY 1ST DECEMBER 7.00 - 8.30PM

The St Michael Steiner School, Wandsworth, SW18

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