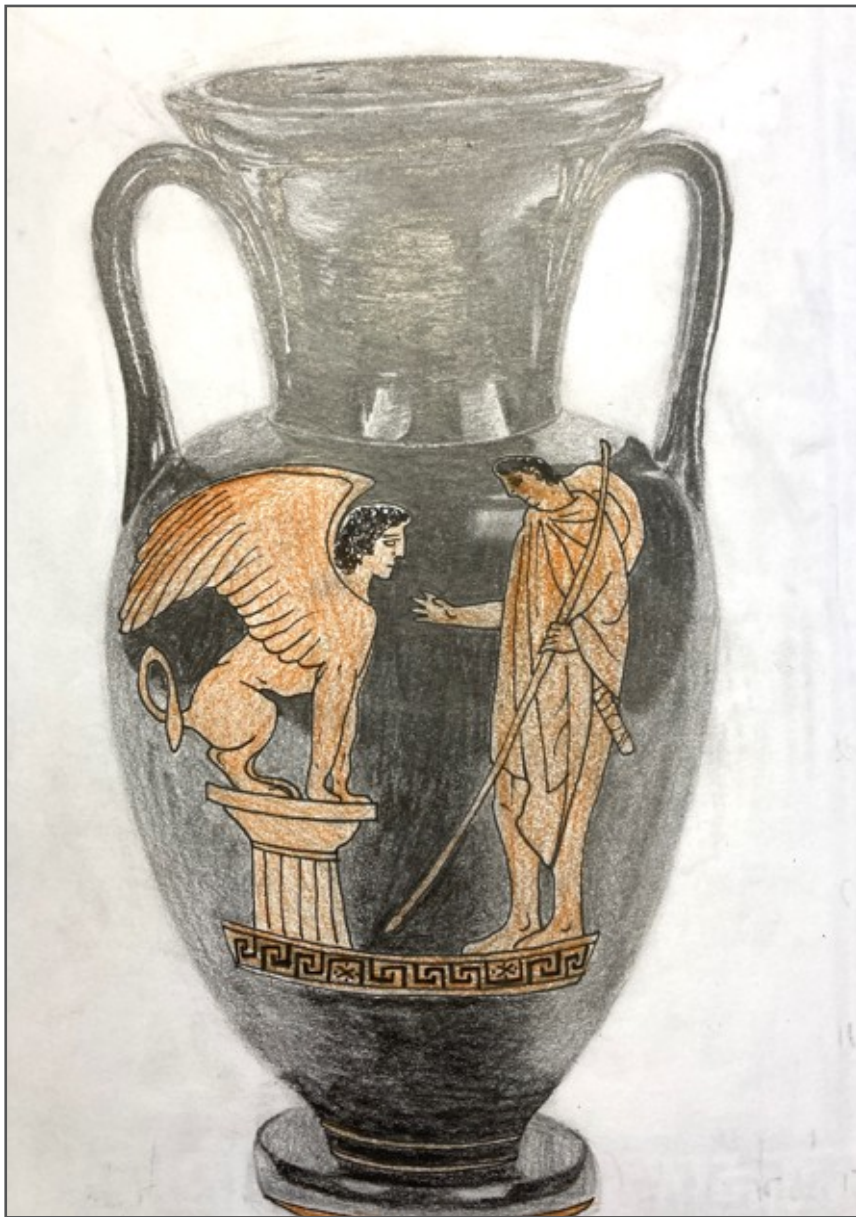


20 + C + M + B + 24

The St Michael Steiner School
Newsletter
January 2024



Amphora depicting Oedipus and the Sphinx of Thebes, MFA Boston.
Drawing by Selina Hallows, Class 10

Parent and Child group - 'drop-in' on Fridays

Our Friday Parent and Child group session is now open for drop-in sessions.

No booking required, sign in and pay at reception every Friday.
(Contactless accepted)

Sessions are also available throughout the week, contact Velika, to pre-book in advance:

velikadimova@stmichaelsteiner.com

For more info and dates:

<https://stmichaelsteiner.hounslow.sch.uk/parent-child-groups/>



Calendar

Spring Term 2024

Thursday 1 February - Open morning

Friday 09 February - INSET day (no school)

HALF TERM: 12-16 February

Monday 19 February - Back to School

Saturday 09 March Open day and AGM

Thursday 14 March - Open morning

Thursday 21 March - Last Day of Term

Summer Term 2024

Monday 15 April - First Day of Term

Monday 6 May - May Day Bank Holiday (no school)

Saturday 11 May - Open day

Thursday 16 May - Open morning

Friday 24 May - INSET day (no school)

Friday & Saturday 24 - 25 May - Parents' Conference

HALF TERM: 27-31 May

Monday 3 June - Back to School

Thursday 20 June - Open morning

Friday 12 July - Last Day of Year

Collage resources please



In their art lessons in the High School, the students work with collage. In order to find images that inspire them, they need a lot of resources in the form of magazines, newspapers, brochures and leaflets. If you have any of these things that you would like to donate, please bring them to reception and put them in the box labelled 'Collage'.

Thank you.



These are some examples of the students' work.

The Gift of 'No'

Helene McGlaufflin

[An article first published in the Spring/Summer 2004 issue of Renewal, USA]

The word *No* suggests limits, control, rejection and finality. It is hard to see how this most simple and powerful expression of the negative can be a gift - an expression of concern and favor, an offer of assistance. But for parents, saying *No*, when done judiciously and appropriately, is a gift that their children need and deserve. It enables them to grow into responsible, balanced adults.

Every child must learn to live with the limitations of life in the world. There are societal rules that must be observed, unsafe acts that should be avoided, types of behavior that cannot be tolerated, chores that must eventually be done. To be a mature and responsible human being means to accept and cope with the natural limits life brings.

The gift of *No* teaches children they cannot have everything they want when they want it. It says, "You must consider other people and your environment before you act." It implies that many decisions are not up to children and that sometimes children must do things they do not wish to do. *No* helps to keep children safe. And, most humbly, this gift gives children a realistic view of life by saying, "You are not in charge of, or the center of, the world."

Nevertheless, saying *No* to our children and consistently following through on limits are among the hardest parenting skills to recognize, learn, and master. It is an art to use *No* wisely, to consciously avoid the danger of being overly restrictive and punitive and to be willing to discipline when necessary. There is an increasing confusion among parents today about the importance of discipline and a consequent reluctance to provide children with the instruction they need in accepting limits. The gift of *No* is becoming more difficult to give, for various reasons.

In North American culture today, choices and the freedom to choose are highly valued. An abundance of choices is apparent everywhere, from the supermarket to the arena of national politics, creating the illusion of limitless bounty and acquisition. Even limit-setting parents who diligently protect their children from exposure to the media and commercialism must contend with this ubiquitous and powerful cultural dynamic.

Some parents reject, on philosophic grounds, the idea that saying *No* to children can be instructive or healthy. They may believe children deserve unlimited choices or that children will learn how to make the right choices in the world without external guidance. They may wish to protect their children from the limits of a harsh world for as long as possible. Or they may adamantly believe saying *No* is mean, since children typically become upset when behaviors are not permitted and wishes are not fulfilled.

Other parents intuitively sense that saying *No* is in the best interest of children but find it difficult, perhaps impossible, to do. Those with gentle personalities do not easily find

a firm voice. Some are exhausted by modern life and cannot muster the stamina that limit-setting demands. Other parents are troubled by guilt about not spending enough time with their children and are reluctant to face the struggles inherent in the process of limit-setting. Some are overcome by the anxiety new parents typically face about whether it is the "right" thing to do for a child.

Yet it is the right thing to do. Ultimately it is an act of love when parents teach their children at a young age fundamental messages about the limits of the world. The children learn an indispensable life lesson in the safety and shelter of their home by those who care most about them. These children develop a strong, settled place within themselves that respects *No* and all it means. They can then, without undue protest, accept limits from teachers, other authority figures, and from the world.

Setting limits should be a continuous process that starts soon after birth and continues into young adulthood. Very young children can experience the meaning of *No* in fundamental matters such as behavior toward others (not hitting or hurting), speaking respectfully to playmates and adults, and accepting the rhythm of the day - naps, mealtimes, and soon. If they are lovingly subjected to and learn about limits in these areas at an early age, they will accept them in later childhood as a matter of course.

With older children, parents can address limit-setting in more complex areas, such as completing chores, doing homework, and working cooperatively on teams and in groups. When a solid foundation has been laid in the early years, then the limit-setting during adolescence is simply a continuation of the process and less likely to become a battlefield. Curfews, decisions about what is safe and what is not, and limits on automobile use are approached with teens who fundamentally understand the limitations of the world and the finality of the word *No*. There are inevitably tears and anguish throughout this process for both children and parents, but with an inherent reward: the development of respectful, responsible young people.

Children who are not taught the meaning of *No* from their parents at a young age will inevitably face the difficulty of learning it outside the family. It is not a question of whether they will face it but when they will face it and by whom it will be taught. When this learning process does not take place in a gradual way in the home, it will take place abruptly in the outside world and will involve unnecessary stress and unhappiness for the child, for his peers, and for the adults who must impose limits. A child who has not developed the ability to accept a *No* continues to seek what he wants when he cannot have it, suffers considerably when his wishes are not realized, and may use manipulative behaviors to bypass the finality of a *No*.

Consider two (hypothetical) children, Mary and John, both aged six, in a kindergarten class that is preparing to use percussion instruments to accompany a song. The teacher has given each child an instrument, and both Mary and John, along with other children in the class, do not receive the instrument they want. Both look very sad and seem reluctant to play their instrument.

The teacher says, "I know lots of people are disappointed they did not get the

instrument they hoped for, but all the instruments are fun in their own way." John, who is used to accepting limits at home, shrugs and starts to play the maracas. Within a few minutes, he is happily singing the song with the rest of the children. Mary, unused to accepting limits set at home, remains disappointed after the teacher has spoken. She pouts, saying, "I don't want to play the drum;" then breaks into tears as the teacher continues with the song. Soon everyone is happily engaged, focused on singing and playing, except Mary, who has refused to participate.

The reactions of these two children illustrate the gift of *No*. John has been given this gift in his early years and is familiar with the feeling of not getting what he wants. He knows, from experience, that disappointment passes and that things will be easier for him if he lets go of what he wanted and accepts the reality before him. He says to himself, "Oh, well, I wanted the drum, but the teacher said *No* and she means it. Maybe these maracas will be fun."

Mary has not had the benefit of *No* in her life and is not used to an adult setting limits on what she may have and what she may do. She is not familiar, as John is, with the inner process of being disappointed and moving on. Mary is thinking, "If I stay sad, maybe the teacher will give me the cymbals." Other adults in Mary's life usually give her what she wants if she waits long enough. But the teacher is different, and it will take many unhappy times and missed opportunities for Mary to learn this process of accepting disappointment and moving on.

It is important to realize how difficult life can be for a child like Mary, who has not had basic training in accepting limits. Whether she is at school, visiting a friend's home, or with relatives, incidents like the one described will occur. Several or many times a day, Mary will miss out on the learning and fun her environment can provide her, because she cannot accept the *No* of the world. She will spend considerable time and energy learning to accept this *No*. If she is fortunate, she will learn it in childhood and adolescence with the help of the world and adults outside her family. If she is unfortunate, she will struggle her whole life with accepting limits, following rules and laws, and respecting authority.

Learning to Give the Gift

Some parents have the good fortune to come naturally to limit-setting with their children and do not find saying *No* difficult or distressing. But for most of us, saying *No* requires a strength of will and a certainty of conviction that we must painfully learn, develop, and maintain. What follows are ideas to help the "most of us" in the latter category as we develop and maintain our ability to set limits:

Develop a strong conviction that saying *No* is in fact a gift that benefits our children. Although children protest - sometimes vehemently - when we say *No*, they need the safety and protection it offers and are often deeply reassured when we say it. Look beyond the tears and tantrums to the lesson of life being offered.

Remain calm and abide in that calm when your child protests or throws a tantrum following the establishment of a limit. Develop an image or an idea that can give you strength when you need it. "Limits are like a loving hug" is an image/idea that has helped me tremendously. While my child or a child I am working with is protesting my *No*, I visualize a large embrace of love and safety.

Begin by saying *No* emphatically about small things of importance and do not change your mind or give in. Saying *No* is a muscle that can be exercised and strengthened over time. Keep practicing, and you will find it easier to be firm over increasingly complex matters and issues.

Develop a repertoire of *No* phrases that are comfortable for you, particularly if you dislike the word itself. "People are not for hitting" works as well as "No hitting." Others include: "We do not do that in our family"; "I cannot let you do that"; "I do not expect you to understand, but I expect you to do what I am asking"; "I wish you wouldn't. ... "

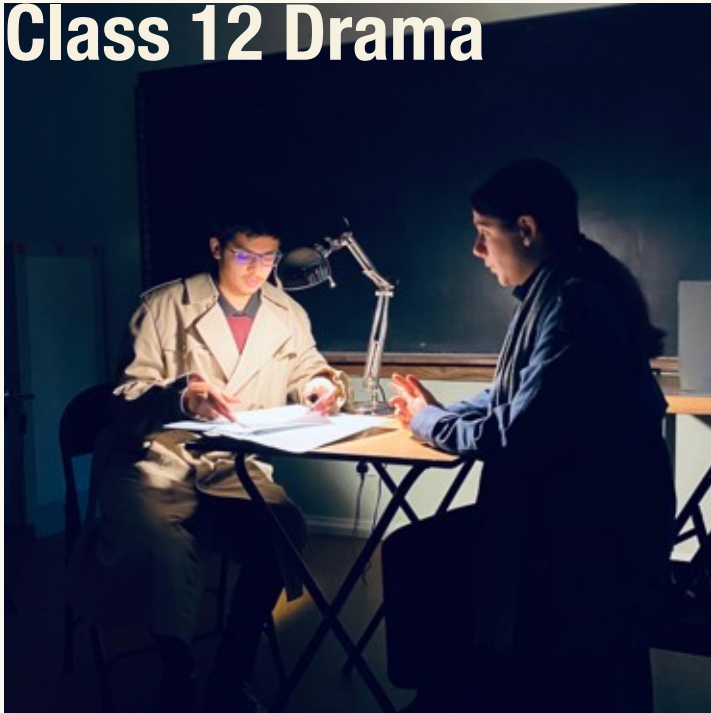
Find as a support another parent who says *No* and shares your values in limit-setting. When your children are young, this might mean a fellow parent who values an early, consistent bedtime; in middle childhood, someone who does not allow "R" movies; in adolescence, a parent who insists on curfews. Call this parent when faced with a limit-setting challenge to get advice and support.

Giving the gift of *No* takes foresight and maturity. It is a gift that we give our children when they are too young to understand, a gift the value of which they will appreciate only in their adulthood. Children come to understand the gift through the repetition of our giving and their acceptance in receiving it time after time through childhood. When limits are truly received, accepted, and learned, all of society is benefited by the young adults who are prepared to be responsible citizens.

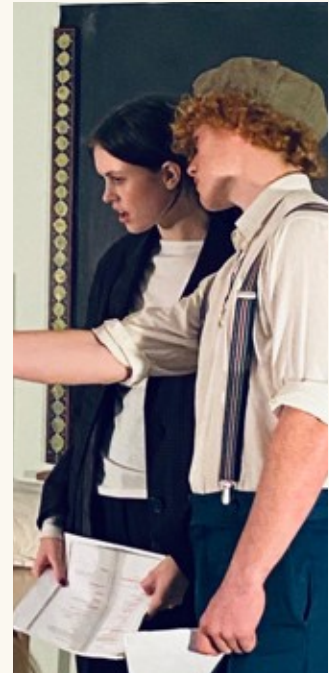


Helene McGlaufflin , MEd, LCPC is a counselor, educator and writer of non-fiction, fiction and poetry. She has worked in public education for over twenty years as a teacher and counselor, and has written numerous articles and booklets about helping children through parenting, education and counseling.

Class 12 Drama



Rough for Theatre II (Beckett) directed by A'ishah Malcolm-Morris, starring Cl. 11 students Ismael Eqbal & Maxine Tsonev



(another) extract from The Dumb Waiter (Pinter) directed by Matthias Aikins-Pascal, starring Cl. 11 students Bo Holden & Walter Kelly

At the end of last term our Class 12 Drama Specialists (Daisy, Barnaby, Matthias and A'ishah) invited a small audience for their directing showcase. It was a dynamic series of performances, offering both humour and profundity.

The class are now marking preparations for their Class 12 Play, details of which will be available very soon. Watch this space...



extract from Antigone (Sophocles) directed by Daisy Meaker, starring Cl. 10 students Emmi Fenton-Roper & Selina Hallowes, & Cl. 12 students Hannah Edsell & Daisy Meaker

extract from The Dumb Waiter (Pinter) directed by Barnaby Michael, starring Cl. 10 students Lila Harrison & Finlay Michael



Class 11 Enlightenment & Romantics

For the first four weeks of term, Class 11 students have been studying the Enlightenment and Romantic period (approximately the 17th to mid-19th centuries) in Europe. They have looked at paintings from different countries—France, Germany, Spain, Britain and America—analysed them purely from observation, and then researched and discussed the different social and political circumstances of those countries at the time, as well as the personal biographies of the artists, to see how these outer conditions, ideals, philosophies, hopes, fears and experiences of those years are reflected in the paintings.

The students have produced annotated images and, at the time of writing, are working on written reports about different aspects of the period, including: The influence of North American indigenous cultures on The Enlightenment; Romanticism as a response to the Enlightenment; and Romanticism and its relationship with the growth of Nationalism. This work will be assessed as part of the Level 2 Social Studies element in the New Zealand Certificate of Steiner Education.

This block will be followed, after half term, by Romantic literature and, in the summer term, Enlightenment philosophy.

These are some of the paintings we have looked at, from top left: Joseph Wright, *Experiment with a Bird in the Air Pump* (1768); Jacques-Louis David, *Bonaparte crossing the Alps*, 1801; Théodore Géricault, *The Raft of the Medusa*, 1818; Caspar David Friedrich, *Monk by the Sea*, 1809; JMW Turner, *Rain, Steam and Speed*, 1844; Francisco Goya, *The Third of May 1808*, 1814.

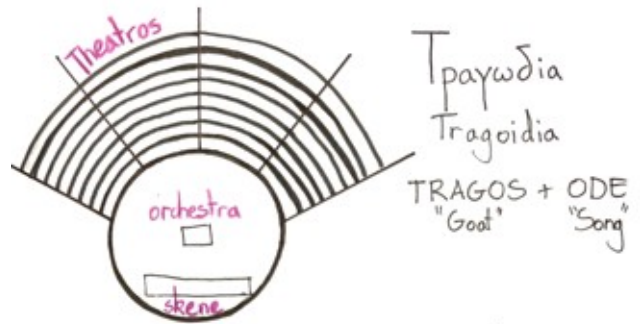


Class 10 Literature

Class 10 have been immersed in the ancient and the classical world. Last term they studied prehistory and looked at creation myths from different cultures before moving on to Homer's epic poems the Iliad and the Odyssey.

This term, in the aptly named 'Love, Blood and Fate' main lesson, they've been studying Ancient Greek tragic theatre - the Theban plays of Sophocles - and Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet.

Here is some of their work.



GREEK TRAGEDY
 The Birth of Theatre
 The forms of theatre as we know them emerged in the 6th Century B.C. in Athens. Theatre was part of the Dionysia festival celebrated in early Spring.



1. Creon: page 125

Repetition
 No, no, no...
 Repetition makes it more powerful

harbor of Death, so shocked, so hard to cleanse!
 why me? Why are you killing me?
 Herald of pain, more words, more grief?
 I died once, you kill me again and again!
 what's the report, boy... some news for me?
 O dear god! a lovely speaker in shack

...not physical death
 emotional death
 ...this line
 ...the deaths and that
 ...what he says about
 ...his death he
 ...died emotionally
 ...some of the
 ...the agonizing
 ...and agonizing
 ...death



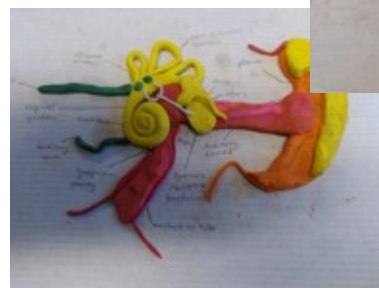
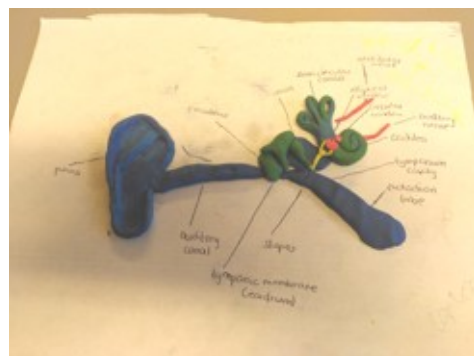
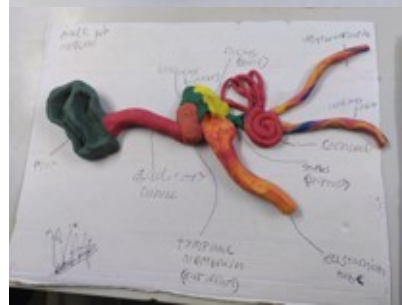
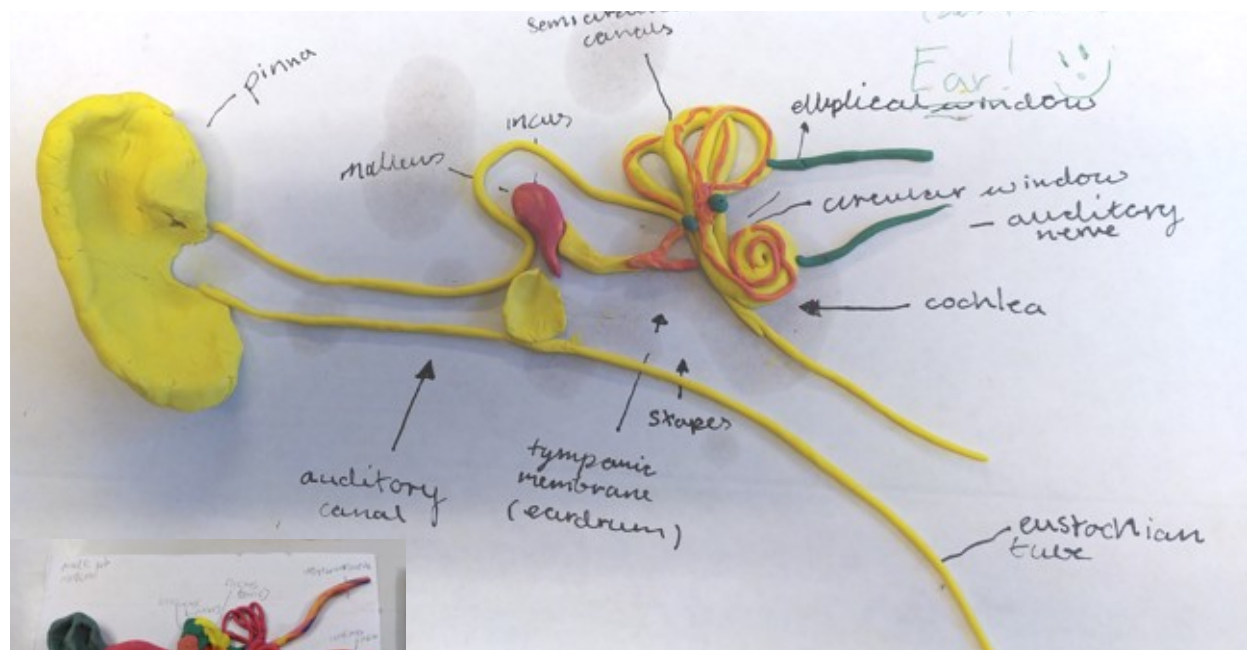
When people remember Achilles, it is often as the saviour of the Greeks, his unyielding courage and his unrelenting pursuit of victory, but I will always remember him as the snivelling boy who cried for his mother in the surf when he didn't get his way. To me, Achilles's selfishness in astonishing. Countless is injured wounded emotionally by the murder of Agamemnon, and only drops his grudge when he himself pride, thinking nothing for his fellow warriors.

However, there is a change in Achilles at the end of the story. When he returns Hector's body to Priam and Paris, his rage is quietened. In fact, the final scenes of the poem narrate his final rest alongside Brises, who is returned to him. He seems to have grown up by then, out of his selfishness and into the man everyone remembers him as. Glory in battle is all very well, but I believe when Achilles grieved with Priam and returned Hector's body to Troy, he found the true meaning of honour and nobility.

Class 9 Anatomy & physiology block

A class 9 student tends to live out of their senses, and its a great place to start from and go inwards to looking deeper and further at the human brain and central nervous system and the rhythmic system; lungs, heart and blood circulation. We started with a study of the skin and our contact with the world around us followed by a study of taste, smell, hearing and sight. Here are the coloured clay models students created of the ear. Students have carried out individual projects and presented to their class on topics such as blood type groups, emotions and the heart, effects of stimulants and alcohol on the body, diving, alien hands, diet and disease, asthma, eczema and what is consciousness?

Sarah Houghton



Community, notices and adverts

[Please note that the school does not endorse or recommend, either in general or in particular, anything offered in the community pages and readers are advised to check the qualifications of practitioners or people offering services here]

COPPER BOWL MAKING WEEKEND WORKSHOP 15 - 17 MARCH

To book or find out more, email Peter Brewin at peterbrewin@stmichaelsteiner.com

Learn how to work with copper, shaping and finishing a beautiful bowl out of a single copper sheet.



Details

Time: Friday evening to midday Sunday 15 - 17 March 2024

Venue: The St Michael Steiner School, London TW13 6PN

Cost: £75

All equipment provided and no experience necessary.



Kilian Voss comes from a long line of craftsmen and has been teaching crafts to children and adults for twenty years. He currently teaches at the St Michael Steiner School in London and also produces his own artistic work in wood, stone and metal.

Become a Mentor

Inspire for a Lifetime

- Work closely with a young person aged 16-24 in Hounslow
- Share your career journey and expertise
- Help your mentee to set and achieve their goals
- 1-2 hours of your time each month
- Full training provided. No previous mentoring experience needed

Sign Up Today

www.hounslowspromise.org/mentor-sign-up



Childcare needed

Hello, I am a mum of a 3 year old lovely boy, who is currently attending kindi at the Children's garden.

I looking for a gentle person in the Steiner community available to work extra hours per week to provide childcare for my child.

We need two pick-ups (ideally Wednesday and Thursday) at Kindergarten 3:30pm to 5:30/6:00pm and Friday mornings 9:30am to 12:30pm (flexible).

We are based in Kingston :)
francesca.pintus@gmail.com