



Curriculum Policy

Policy Owner	Simon Birch	March 2019
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The curriculum: Kindergarten

Early Years from age 3-6 years: teaching works with the children's will, through activity, and through imitation. The day follows a regular rhythm of creative play, songs and counting games, an activity such as food preparation, bread making, painting or modelling, morning snack, outdoor play and story time. In Steiner Waldorf Kindergartens children benefit from an extended childhood. They have the opportunity to embed basic skills (physical, emotional, social and cognitive) and develop lifelong learning habits that enable them to become enthusiastic, imaginative, resilient, creative and eager to learn students. We follow the statutory Early Years Foundation Stage (with some exemptions granted by the DfE along with all Steiner Waldorf settings) for children up to the age of five.

The content of the child's whole environment is the learning context; the child imitates the people and activity that are in his/her environment. In the kindergarten, experiential learning, discovery through creative play and social interaction with peers and teachers constitute the main education themes. Skills and knowledge are acquired through play, daily activities and social interaction. Children stay in the same Kindergarten with the same teacher for three years. In the final year (age 5-6) there is an additional curriculum including weekly gardening lessons and special projects to meet the children's growing independence and developing skills. Please see curriculum framework for more details. The formal schooling process begins in Class 1 when, age 6 rising 7, reading and writing are introduced.

The curriculum: Class 1(Year 2) to Class 8 (Year 9)

From Class 1 the emphasis is on developing pupils' artistic expression and social capacities to foster creative and analytical modes of understanding.

The core subjects of the curriculum are delivered in the Main Lesson, up to a two-hour lesson at the beginning of each day that focuses on one topic continuously for usually three weeks. This develops the habit of sustained concentration on one topic, both over the two-hour period and over the three weeks and allows in-depth exploration. The Main Lesson contains a wide range of activities and ways of engaging with the subject. For example, a maths Main Lesson could include dance movement, throwing and stamping out a rhythm, singing, art work, storytelling, mental and written arithmetic. This gives every kind of learner a point of access to the subject. The rhythm of the Main Lesson aims to meet the pupils' natural energy patterns so that they do not become restless or unfocused.

The Class Teacher who delivers the Main Lesson teaches the same class from Class 1 to Class 8 – unless circumstances prevent this. This continuity means the Class Teacher knows each pupil and the social dynamic of the class very well and so can facilitate the successful management of the social and interpersonal issues that relate to the increasing maturity of the pupils.

Pupils are regularly screened to assess their learning needs. Appropriate interventions supporting pupils with a wide range of needs can be made available. In addition to this provision the school also works and liaises with external agencies to meet the needs of pupils.

The school day starts with a two-hour multi-disciplinary Main Lesson taught to the whole class by the Class Teacher. The lessons after morning break are taught by mainly subject

teachers, with three subject lessons before lunch and then two further subject lessons after lunch. All timetables broadly follow this pattern.

Numeracy

- Class 1 – Introduction to addition, subtraction, multiplication and division
- Class 2 – Mental practice and longer exercises, moving on to larger numbers, number bonds, odd and even numbers, columns and carrying over and simple geometry
- Class 3 – Practice of all 12 tables continues; long multiplication and long division will be introduced, together with money handling and change, and various forms of measurement involving linear dimensions, liquids, solids and temporal intervals
- Class 4– Introduction of fractions; measurements and area work continue
- Class 5 – Compass geometry are introduced, also the decimal system
- Class 6 – Percentages, profit and loss, simple interest and proportion and ratio are covered; geometry lessons introduce the use of the protractor
- Class 7 – Graphs and algebra, geometry
- Class 8 – Fractions, squares and roots, equations and practical problems

Humanities

A rich immersion in the humanities begins in Class 1, as each day children listen with rapt attention as the teacher tells a fairy tale or nature story. Progressing through the classes, the children absorb the legends of saints, multicultural folklore, Native American tales, Norse mythology and sagas; stories of Ancient India, Persia, Mesopotamia, Egypt and Greece; the History of Western civilization from Rome through the Middle Ages, the rise of Islam, the Age of Exploration, the Renaissance and Reformation. In the early years, by “living into” these cultures through legends and literature, children gain flexibility and an appreciation for the diversity of mankind.

The study of geography as a separate subject begins in Class 4 and starts with a study of the immediate environment, broadening out in the following years to regional, national and global studies.

- Class 4 – Project work based on the study of the geography of the local area.
- Class 5 – Geography of the British Isles. History: The culture and religion of early civilisations of India, Persia, Babylonia and Egypt, moving on to classical ancient Greek history.
- Class 6 – European physical and human geography. History Roman Empire, Roman Britain; field trip to Roman site, the rise of Christianity, Saxon and Danish invasions of Britain, William the Conqueror.
- Class 7 – World geography, including focus on one continent and looking at the cultural, material and economic conditions of specific societies. History: the Middle Ages and the transition from feudalism to the Renaissance, and the Age of Discovery with the great voyages of the 15th to the 17th centuries
- Class 8 – Climate, weather systems, trade and wealth of nations.

Modern Foreign Languages

From Class 1 onwards, children learn a wide range of German and French vocabulary and short phrases through songs, verses, poems, recitation, games and cultural activities. The written language is introduced towards the end of Class 3 or beginning of Class 4 where pupils also begin to gain an understanding of the grammar, spelling, phonics and structure of the language.

Technology and ICT

Pupils are introduced to a wide range of simple technologies through their practical creative work starting with cooking and sewing. As they get older this develops to include gardening, building, woodwork, pottery and metalwork. In these activities they use an increasing range of hand tools, and learn how mechanical tools function. E-safety and computer technology are introduced towards the end of the Lower School when the pupils have developed an understanding of a range of mechanical technologies in the broad context of other disciplines.

Religious Education

Religious Education meets the local Agreed Syllabus. The moral and spiritual well-being of the children is nurtured by developing a strong sense of belonging for all children whatever their faith background. This is achieved through a calendar of seasonal festivals that the school celebrates together. A sense of reverence and an attitude of tolerance and respect towards each other is encouraged and modelled by the teachers and reinforced by verses said at the beginning and end of the day. From Class 2 pupils have a separate RE lesson each week where they learn about historic and contemporary religious beliefs from all the main religious traditions. Pupils develop a well-informed understanding of world religions, and a strong sense of the value of community and of the wonder of the natural world.

Eurythmy

Eurythmy is an art of movement that engages the whole human being. It aims to harmonise the child physical well-being with their feelings or emotions. Regular eurythmy practice lessons help children to become more coordinated, graceful and alert and to be more at ease with themselves. In the eurythmy lesson the children move to poetry, prose text and live instrumental music and this experience deepens their aesthetic appreciation of literature and music and complements other aspects of the curriculum. Eurythmy also requires the children to work in groups which develops spatial awareness and a capacity to sense the movements of the group as a whole, while also concentrating on their own movement.

Physical Education

There is both integrated and discrete physical education. Integrated physical education includes the movement exercises that come at the beginning of Main Lesson to help the pupils to settle their focus for learning. The use of rhythm and movement may come into many lessons, such as maths where pupils, for example may throw and catch beanbags as they recite times tables, or a foreign language, where pupils might follow a sequence of movements when learning parts of the body.

Weekly **games** lessons include a wide range of team games. In the younger classes games are always introduced with a story so that the physical activity has an imaginative focus. Around Class 5 the ancient Greek Olympic events are introduced: running, jumping, discus and javelin. Ball games are introduced with rules tailored to the age group. From Class 7 to Class 10, there is a more formal games programme, which introduces the pupils to a broad range of activities including: hockey, badminton, swimming, volleyball and basketball as well as some athletics and gymnastics.

The Natural Environment

The curriculum respects the restorative benefits of the natural world and the outdoor programme includes land work, farming, and a range of science main lessons, field trips, as well as well-planned outdoor spaces for playing, and opportunities to hold lessons in outdoor classrooms. Science is introduced through a series of Main Lessons, starting with Man and Animal in Class 3 when the class is presented with a project that focuses on the creatures that move in and around the earth. Then the British Isles is studied and the animal theme is continued, usually looking at animals that are native to our islands. In Class 5, the focus in the science Main Lesson shifts one step closer to the earth itself with the study of the plant kingdom and in Class 6 it moves on to the earth itself, with a Main Lesson in Mineralogy.

In these Main Lessons the scientific approach stresses the activity of the senses rather than the activity of dissecting and analysing the parts, because children at this stage learn most through what they can see, hear, smell, taste or touch. The aim is to bring the children's senses to life and science is a stimulating means to this goal.

Music

Music is taught in an integrated way and as a separate subject. Singing and recorder playing is used in Main Lesson in a wide variety of contexts and all children sing daily. In the weekly music lesson all pupils learn musical notation and pupils have the opportunity to learn other musical instruments.

Art

Art is taught in an integrated way and as a separate subject. Artistic work is an integral part of the Main Lesson and in a wide variety of contexts. Pupils have opportunities to learn a wide range of art techniques in weekly art lessons.

Handwork

Handwork is an integral part of the curriculum for all children from Class 1 to Class 8. It provides a balancing element to the intellectual activities experienced elsewhere in the curriculum and is designed to aid the harmonious development of the child. The scheme of work is taken from Rudolf Steiner's indications, which outline examples of activities that match the developmental stage of the child, ensure progression and are tailored to suit the needs of the teaching group. Examples of Handwork skills that are taught in the weekly lesson include sewing, knitting, crochet, weaving, tailoring, dyeing and felting, with importance placed on the use of high quality, beautiful and natural materials in order to enhance the artistic and creative development of the child.

Crafts

As well as practical activities guided by the class teacher, such as modelling and painting, pupils are also taught various crafts in other subject based lessons. From Class 1 to Class 8 a weekly Handwork lesson gives each child the opportunity to develop a range of skills, such as knitting, sewing, weaving and crochet. From Class 6 all pupils begin to learn specialist crafts and this is continued wherever possible into the Upper School. Examples of crafts taught are: woodwork, wood carving, stone carving, green woodworking, metal work (and the use of a forge), ceramics (and the use of the wheel and kiln), textiles, paper making and book binding.