

# Welcome to St Paul's Steiner School

Welcome to St Paul's Steiner School. St. Paul's Steiner School is a registered independent school and a full member of the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship. We hope this handbook will help you find your feet.

It is important to us that you are kept are fully informed about both the schools day-to-day routines, rules and expectations and its management and governance. Hopefully this handbook and the school website fulfil this aim. Please let us know if we have made any omissions so that these may be addressed in future drafts and do please bring any questions to us as soon as they arise – further details of how to contact members of staff can be found in the Communications policy available at reception and on the School website.

The main text should give you all the general information you need, while the appendices should help you with more detailed questions.

Before we look at school life today and at the future of our school in a world that presents our children with unprecedented challenges, we recognise that the School as you see it today with its parent and child groups, four kindergartens and eighth classes for children up to age 13/14 would not have been possible without the support and commitment of parents and friends.

Until this building was acquired in 1995, Steiner schools in London had existed only in rented church halls and port-a-cabins: finding suitable premises that were in any way affordable seemed impossible. St Paul's Church was derelict when we took it on and all that exists today is testament to the voluntary labour and love of parents and friends who have worked alongside and supported the School's staff throughout this journey.

While the challenges and opportunities the school faces today are different to those of the early days more is asked of parents than is required in mainstream education because the lifeblood of the school remains the commitment of parents:

- commitment to support the educational principles at home
- commitment to support fundraising activity
- commitment to pay the fees

Thus the future of the school lies in the hands of the parents, teachers and friends of the school today.

## Staff List – September 2016

Principal	Stephanie Jansen
Parent & Child Group Leader	Mariela Echeverria
Mulberry Bush Kindergarten	Julia Allan
	Rebecca Chauncy Hodgson
Rosebush Kindergarten	Elena Oliver Andres
	Very Garcia
Chestnut Tree Kindergarten	Hannah Jahns
	Joanna McEwan
Apple Tree	Sarah Newby
	Lauren Robinson
Class I	Shefali Gudka
Class II	Hannah McCarthy
Class III	Lucy Mellor
Class IV	Fiona Murray
Class V	Simone Freeman
Class VI/Art	Elizabeth Perrett
Class VII	Anna Retsler
Class VIII	Jane Akuwudike
Maths	Paul Murray
French	Francoise Voitot
German	Elizabeth Kelly
Movement & Games	Rachel Steggall
	Kevin Davidson
Music	Carolina Pintos
Pianist	Andriani Minou
Violin	Salome Rateau
Eurythmy Class I to VIII	Caroline Liljestrom
Eurythmy Kindergarten	Juje McGregor
Woodwork	Pablo Gardiazabal
Handwork	Marth Garland
	Nina Gebauer
Gardening	Beatrice Bless
SENCo	Annina Ovington McCormick
Learning Support	Kate Armstrong
Lunch Club	James Hoey – Leader Classes
	Rosa Brodgen
	Mita Nesi – Leader Kindergarten
	Nicoletta Favetta
Art Therapist	Penny Ferguson
Eurythmy Therapist	Vacant
School Administrator	Angelita Ravizzoli
Receptionist/Admin support	Pam Mattis
Admissions Administrator	Achala Wickramaratne
Caretaker	Derek Lee
Finance	Helen Smither
Book Keeper	Oleg Gailans
Architect	Christopher Libby
Architect	Clive Henderson

# Introduction to Steiner Education

*'Our highest endeavour must be to develop free human beings who are able of themselves to impart purpose and direction to their lives.'*

Rudolf Steiner

The first Steiner School was opened in 1919 in Stuttgart for the children of the workers of the Waldorf Astoria Cigarette Factory: 'Steiner' and 'Waldorf' education are often used interchangeably. The teaching methodology and curriculum are derived from the insights of Rudolf Steiner. He identified three phases of childhood each characterised by a distinct learning style. The Waldorf curriculum, taught in more than a thousand Steiner schools worldwide, responds to and enhances the child's natural development. For further reading on Waldorf Education and Rudolf Steiner, see Appendix 1.

## The First Seven Years: Imitation

The young child learns instinctively by imitation from everyone and everything around him/her and thrives given a regular daily and weekly rhythm. The Waldorf-Steiner environment is unique in that it reflects the security and feel of a warm family home, and includes activities such as baking, sewing, gardening and preparing and sharing communal meals. The mixed-age group also mirrors a family and encourages the children to learn from and guide one another. There is a strong emphasis on the cultivation of good habits, and pre-academic skills are acquired unconsciously.

It is wonderful to see the children begin to regard school as a safe and fun place to expand their limits and grow.

## The Second Seven Years: Imagination

To light the fire of 'enthusiastic' learning, subjects are presented through narrative. The aim of the Steiner curriculum at this stage is to awaken children's capacities for imagination, wonder and creativity. Children create their own textbooks, meticulously documenting what they are learning in their lessons. Subjects are presented as potent, interwoven and overlapping strands. Ultimately, the aim of these methods is to bypass the superficial recollection of facts and leave a lasting 'education'.

The teachers guide this all from an intimate understanding of each child's strengths and needs, as traditionally the Class teacher and the entire class will stay together for these years.

## The Third Seven Years: Truth, Discrimination and Judgement

From the age of 14, the young people are developing powers of independent judgement, awakening new faculties of thinking, and discovering new-found freedom and self-awareness. In all disciplines from calculus to history of art, from physics to music, the students use their powers of reflection and experiment to build an understanding of what is true, based on personal experience, thinking and judgement and supported by specialist teachers with whom they can test that understanding.

# Education at St Paul's Steiner School

*'Receive the children with reverence*

*Educate them with Love*

*Relinquish them in freedom'*

Rudolf Steiner

## Early Years

### **Adult & Child Groups: Birth to 3 years**

The school runs several sessions which have a rhythm similar to a morning in the kindergarten. Periods of activity and play are balanced with quieter times for rest, stories and songs. These mornings can provide valuable support for parents and carers who come away feeling nurtured and refreshed as well as giving a good introduction to the life of our school.

Attendance at adult and child groups does not automatically lead to a place in one of the kindergartens. Parents must register with the school and will be allocated a place on the waiting list. For more information on our admissions please see our policy on the website or at reception.

### **Kindergartens: Rosebush, Mulberry Bush, Chestnut Tree and Apple Tree: 3 to 6½ years**

Having created a caring, homely environment for the children, each kindergarten teacher seeks to foster self initiated creative play. Simple toys and natural materials stimulate the use of fantasy and imagination, which are nourished by the teacher with stories, songs, rhymes and rhythmic movement. The children participate daily in a range of artistic and domestic activities and have a period of outdoor play in all weathers. Kindergarten life follows a strong daily, weekly, and seasonal rhythm highlighted by the celebration of the festivals throughout the year (for more information on the Early Years at St Paul's see appendices 2,3 and 9).

Children who are 3 and 4 years old are eligible for Nursery Education Grants: the school will claim this grant on behalf of the parents and deduct from the school fees.

As we do not start formal teaching of literacy or numeracy until class I we have obtained exemptions from these EYFS goals. The curriculum addressed all the remaining goals of the EYFS.

### **Transition from Kindergarten to Class I**

This is an exciting step into the next phase of the child's school life for which the child must be developmentally ready. Acceptance into Class I from kindergarten is not automatic: the kindergarten teachers and class teachers work closely together to determine the readiness of each child and the admissions process will also ensure if the School is able to meet the needs of each child.

The first few weeks of Class I are important in establishing the new rhythm and it is imperative that the child attends school from the first day of term. Children are taught from 8.30am-1.15pm during the first term of Class I. After the Christmas break Monday and Tuesday will end at 3.30pm.

## **Lower and Middle School (Age 6 ½ to 14 years)**

### **The Timetable and Curriculum**

Each class begins the day with a two-hour Main Lesson: this gives the children time to immerse themselves in each subject and to explore it from many angles - intellectual, artistic and practical. Main lessons are taught by the class teacher in 'blocks' which are three or four weeks long. Each block focuses on a specific strand of the curriculum, such as literacy, numeracy, history, geography, music and science. Within each main lesson block there is a three-day rhythm: the ideas presented each day mature as the child plays after school and sleeps at night (please see Home Rhythms, Appendix 3) allowing the child to start with a fresh understanding the next day.

After main lesson the children have a break, followed by subject lessons taught by specialist teachers.

Subject lessons include French, German, Woodwork, Handwork, Music and Eurythmy (see appendix 4). Music is integrated into the main lesson for the younger classes and is taught as a specialist subject from Class III. Games and Movement are taught by the class teacher in the younger classes but become a specialist subject from Class III. Drama is taught by the class teacher. Steiner education includes all the recognised subjects of the National Curriculum. An outline of the curriculum year-by-year is provided below.

### **The Lower School Curriculum**

#### **Class I (age 7) & Class II (age 8)**

In the first two years the children are introduced to reading and writing and become familiar with the four rules of arithmetic. These subjects are taught through the narrative of fairy tales, nature stories, legends and fables and through songs, games, poetry and plays.

#### **Class III (age 9)**

The ninth year sees children stepping outside the familiar world of heredity and imitation that they have lived in since babyhood. They begin to perceive themselves as independent beings. This new questioning phase is met by a more demanding curriculum that seeks to help the children orientate themselves in their new world through its practical content: farming, crafts, building, weighing and measuring help to reassure the child that there are natural laws by which all human beings live.

#### **Class IV (age 10)**

The children are now ready to set out on their journey of exploration beginning with the study of local geography, man and animal and Norse mythology. Towards the end of Class IV, the children prepare for the team activities and the disciplines they will need for their sporting activities in Class V.

#### **Class V (age 11)**

The children study the British Isles, botany and the myths of the ancient civilizations: India, Persia, Mesopotamia, Egypt and Greece.

In harmony with their study of Ancient Greece many the Class Vs from the UK camp for three days at Michael Hall School to train for and compete in the ancient Olympic Games. This is a momentous and moving occasion marking the children's passage through the golden heart of childhood towards puberty.

## The Middle School Curriculum

### **Class VI (age 12)**

A new phase of development is marked by transition to Middle School. The Middle School has its own assemblies and the transition is marked by new expectations about work and conduct in school. Pupils study the geology of the earth, mineralogy, physics, European geography, Roman history and the Middle Ages. Woodwork projects demanding greater skills and precision are also introduced at Class VI.

### **Class VII (age 13)**

As they become teenagers the pupils need to know more about the wider world around them and how things work. Topics covered include health and nutrition, the Age of Discovery, the Renaissance, the Reformation, Copernican astronomy, chemistry, algebra and world geography.

### **Class VIII (13-14)**

Pupils are supported through this often turbulent stage in their lives with a study of the revolutions, poetry, practical experiments in physics and chemistry, the human skeleton, America or Africa. During this year the pupils prepare a personal project, on a subject of their own choosing. This is a substantial piece of home and self-study which must include a practical element. A highlight of the school year is the presentation of the Class VIII projects. They also perform a full length play for the community.

## Special Needs

Our SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinating Officer) co-ordinates all the screening for and work with children with special needs. This includes children with educational, behavioural or physical needs. Children are identified either at admission, through biennial class screening or referral by the class teacher.

Children receiving support of any kind from the Special Needs Department are entered in the SEN register which monitors the child's progress and the success of strategies put in place to support learning. Children may be recommended support through one-to-one or small-group learning support or other specialist lessons or therapies.

If it becomes clear that any child needs continual additional support a Health and Education Care Plan is applied for, following diagnostic screening from outside agencies.

The additional cost of most extra classes, screening or reports is met by the parents unless the child has a HECF.

The school policy for children with Special Needs is available from reception.

## The School Doctor and Health

The school doctor, a medical doctor with further anthroposophical medical training, visits the school once a term. The child's teacher makes referrals in consultation with parents. Children may be referred for pedagogical, health or developmental reasons. There is a nominal charge of £30 for a consultation and parents are expected to attend with their child.

The doctor may prescribe anthroposophical or homeopathic remedies or therapies such as art therapy, massage or Eurythmy therapy sessions for which the parents are administratively and financially responsible. Eurythmy therapy is the name given to specific exercises that are given to help children with their physical and inner development. These exercises are undertaken with a specially trained Eurythmy therapist. There is a nominal weekly charge of £15 for therapies.

The school does not carry out dental checks, hearing or sight tests, nor does it provide immunisation boosters.

## The Principal

The Trustees have delegated responsibility for the development of pedagogical work in the School to the Principal. She works collegiately and consultatively with School staff to ensure that the experience of the teachers within the School together with wider developments within Steiner Waldorf pedagogy, mainstream education and child development are reflected in initiatives to continuously improve the quality of the education provided to the children.

## The Teachers

Our teachers come from all over the world and many walks of life and are united in their endeavour to apply Rudolf Steiner's art of education to modern-day needs. In addition to having completed the Steiner Teaching Training course, many of the teachers have other teaching qualifications including QTS and NVQ 3 to 6.

Teacher training and development are an integral part of good practice. The Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship runs an annual conference at Easter and other professional development courses which our teachers attend, as well as training sessions, usually in the summer term, to prepare teachers for the coming year.

The school regularly welcomes advisors from the Fellowship, who offer valuable feedback to the teachers with regard to curriculum development. We employ specialist trainers for inset days and on-going work and are supported by advisors from the local authority in respect of Special Needs and Early Years work. The school has a programme of cyclical teacher assessment.

# Governance, Leadership and Management

*'The healthy social life is only found  
When in the mirror of each human soul  
The whole community finds its reflection  
And when in the community  
Lives the strength of the single soul.'*  
Rudolf Steiner

## School Management Structure

When the first Waldorf School was founded in 1919, the responsibility for running the school was shared by the faculty working according to republican principles. In our school:

- The Trustees are legally responsible for the school's governance.
- Principal, working with the College of Teachers, is responsible for the pedagogy (teaching and learning).
- The School's administrative and support staff are responsible for other areas of school life, such as premises, finance, communications, etc.
- A Parent-Teacher-Friends Association is being developed to facilitate the work of the parents whose commitment is an essential part of the school life.

Whilst the management system is supported by a Principal to whom the Trustees delegate day to day responsibility for the running of the School, the management relies on the individual commitment of each member of staff to the service of the School. This ensures that the holistic nature of Steiner education is reflected and allows for greater communal responsibility where "the strength and virtue of each one is living".

## School Development Objectives

In addition to the day to day management activities, it is essential that the school works diligently to ensure its longer term viability and success.

The following medium term objectives have been identified:

- Recruit and retain the best teachers and staff
- Expand educational provision and enrich the school's facilities to improve the education we offer
- Pursue an active policy of inclusiveness, by supporting families unable to pay full fees through our community funded places scheme
- Continue the restoration and development of the school's main building to enable it to house a critical mass of students and facilities for the foreseeable future and to comply with the terms of our lease
- Secure additional space to house expanding classes and facilities and ensure we have the funding and focus to achieve this.



In order to achieve the strategic school development objectives, a review of the School's pedagogical structure has been undertaken (resulting in the appointment of a Principal in September 2014 and of Lower and Middle School coordinators in September 2015) and the Trustees have undertaken a series of actions to ensure that effective strategies are in place to meet any identified risks.

Further upcoming actions for the current academic year (15/16) include an appraisal of all non-pedagogical staff and a commitment to evolve a PTFA as a new platform for parent involvement in the School. Together these actions will ensure that the School has firm foundations on which to grow.

Any parents who have skills, experience or contacts that may be helpful in achieving any of the activities listed on the School Plan are kindly requested to contact the Principal or Chair of Trustees.

## **Decision Making**

For several years the School has operated a mandate system in which a number of individuals have held decision-making authority on behalf of the School. All mandates had a clear, written remit defining their role; composition, tasks and scope of authority. Mandate holders were drawn from the staff or parent body and often worked with a small reference group with whom they consulted and shared workload. Co-ordination between mandate holders was facilitated through regular chaired meetings.

This is a both a creative and a challenging way to run the school, and it has recently evolved with the appointment of a Principal to support and facilitate decision-making throughout the School. The current management structure continues to evolve but still requires a lifelong commitment to learning and a willingness to engage from all members of the School community alongside the pupils.

## **The College of Teachers**

The College of Teachers is the pedagogical heart of the school. All staff, after their first year of employment, are invited to join the College, which meets every Thursday afternoon in common with other Waldorf schools. One of the primary functions of College is child study and class study. Every College member makes a personal commitment to the school through inner work and practical activity.

Each department (Early Years, Teachers' Meeting and Administration) report back to College, who are then collectively responsible for ratifying all policies connected to the pedagogy. Membership of College also implies a connection to the anthroposophical impulse, as outlined by Rudolf Steiner, which underpins the ethos, structure and cultural life of the school.

College meetings are an opportunity for freely sharing insights and experiences that can arise through pedagogical practice inspired by Rudolf Steiner. College membership thus creates an evolving body of knowledge and expertise that can inform the future development both of the teachers and the school as a whole.

## Current College, Trustee & Resource Mandates

- Chairs of College,
- Early Years and Class and Subject Teachers Meetings (at which the main work of the College is co-ordinated)
- Lower and Middle School Coordinators
- Staff Conferencing and Study
- Teacher Support
- Quality Assurance
- Education Development Plan
- Admissions
- Recruitment
- Complaints
- Timetable
- Child Protection
- Health & Safety
- Human Resources
- Safeguarding
- Premises
- School development Planning
- Fundraising
- Finance
- Communications
- Media (PR)
- Parent Involvement

## School Administration

In order to focus the school's limited resources on the educational work in the classrooms our administrative team is small and lean. The School's administration is done by two full time and three part-time staff.

Their work includes:

- supervision of reception
- admissions administration including tours
- safer recruitment administration
- safe guarding children including DBS administration
- bookkeeping

- credit control
- attendance audits
- triggering cycles of policy review
- liaison with statutory bodies and preparation for inspections
- administrative support for the Principal, Chairs and Co-ordinators
- First Aid
- first point of contact for internal and external communications
- publication of the fortnightly School Flier and updating of the website

# School Finance

The school is funded solely by the financial contribution made by the parents. We are a registered charity and operate on a not-for-profit basis. We wish to make the education available to as many children as possible irrespective of their families' economic status. Our community supported place scheme enables children from families on low income to benefit from the education.

We aim to make a balance between keeping fees affordable to most parents and paying sufficiently attractive salaries to attract quality staff and cover other running costs.

## School fees

Fees are charged per school year (or part of year for children starting mid-year). Fees vary according to the class your child attends.

School fees and any additional charges or discounts are set by the Trustees annually, by Easter of the preceding school year. Fees are published on the school's website. Families at the school are also informed via email or post of any changes in the fee structure. Families are invoiced annually and may choose whether to pay annually, termly or monthly over 10 months (from September to June).

School Fees cover basic costs of education. Additional charges will be made for other items including sports fees, trips and outings, musical instruments, lunch clubs & pencil rolls. Where possible we will include these charges in the annual invoice.

<b>Payment Option</b>	<b>Annual fees due by</b>	<b>Termly fees due by</b>	<b>10 Months fees due by</b>
	1 <sup>st</sup> September	1 <sup>st</sup> September	1 <sup>st</sup> September 1 <sup>st</sup> October 1 <sup>st</sup> November 1 <sup>st</sup> December
		1 <sup>st</sup> January	1 <sup>st</sup> January 1 <sup>st</sup> February 1 <sup>st</sup> March
		1 <sup>st</sup> April	1 <sup>st</sup> April 1 <sup>st</sup> May 1 <sup>st</sup> June

School fees are due in advance and must be paid by standing order. The table below shows the dates by which fees must have cleared into the school account for each payment plan. Payments received after these dates incur a penalty charge for every week or part of week overdue. The school reserves the right to exclude pupils for non-payment of contracted fees or in the absence of a signed contract.

If for any reason you believe you will be late with a payment we require that you contact the Finance Group in writing in advance of any variance from the terms of your contract.

St Paul's Steiner School works on a full-fee basis. The school does not operate a 'work exchange' system, i.e. it is not possible to work in exchange for fees.

In the event of any dispute relating to the provision of education, parents are asked to follow the procedures for concerns and complaints (see separate policy). Payment of school fees must be kept in line with the agreed schedule.

### **Registration fee and deposit**

Following attendance of an open tour, a non-refundable registration fee is payable to register a child.

On acceptance of a place at the school a deposit is due for each child. This will be returned when the child leaves the school providing that the correct notice has been given and all fees are settled in full. The deposit is not refundable if you do not take up the place.

A signed Finance Contract, signed Deposit Contract and signed Terms & Conditions contract must be in place for each child in school, prior to commencement at the school.

### **Notice of withdrawal**

Notice of withdrawal has to be given to the school office in writing, dated and signed by the parent/s or guardian/s. We do not accept verbal notification of notice neither can a notice be backdated. A term's notice, or payment of a term's fees in lieu of notice, is required when a child leaves the school. Notice must be given before the first day of the child's last term at the school. Where notice is not given or is given after the first day of the term, fees due in lieu of notice are calculated as follows: one third of the annual fees are due from the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the month after the school is made aware in writing that the child is leaving the school.

If notice is subsequently withdrawn, and the child remains at the school beyond the notice period, a further term's notice will need to be given in writing with a revised leaving date.

### **Community supported places**

Parents who are unable to meet the full fees may apply for a Community Supported Place. Details of how to apply and the application form can be found on the school website. Although we offer some Community Supported Places, prospective parents must be realistic about the length and level of financial commitment.

Community Support Places are funded out of the fees paid by other parents in the school. We ask that families explore every other possible source of support, including extended family, before turning to the school community for subsidy. It is expected that payment of school fees is given first priority in the family budget after meeting housing, utility, clothing and food costs.

When applying, families are required to provide detailed information about income and expenditure for both parents and guardians, and supply supporting evidence.

Applications are normally considered during the Spring Term for the following academic year. Where an unexpected change in financial circumstances arises during the school year, late applications may still be considered at the next finance meeting following receipt of application and evidence.

The decision whether to grant subsidy is taken by the Finance Group. The decision is made taking account of the school's budget for Community Supported Places, the family's financial situation and the amount paid by other families in the school in similar circumstances. In some cases the Finance Group may consider a short-term deferral where a subsidy cannot be awarded.

Priority in allocating subsidy is given to families with young children. Subsidy is generally granted for a year. It is expected that parents make every effort to increase their contribution and ultimately pay full fees so that assistance can be given to new families. All concessions are subject to continuous review, and may be reduced should family circumstances change during the course of a year. In case the family financial circumstances improve you are obliged to immediately notify the Finance Group.

There can be no variation of fees agreed at time of admission within the first 12 months in the school.

The school will not consider applications for Community Supported Places or deferrals where school fees are outstanding.

Subsidy must be re-applied for annually.

Subsidy cannot be granted retrospectively.

Decisions will be notified to applicants in writing. Appeals against Finance Group decisions should be made in writing within seven working days.

### **Management of the school's finances**

The Trustees have overall responsibility for the school's finances. A Trustee has oversight of the work of the school Bursar, meets with the finance team regularly and forms part of the Finance Group of the school. The Trustee is responsible for ensuring that finance policies and procedures are followed.

All matters concerning finance should be addressed to the Bursar.

The school's accounts are audited annually and are submitted to and published by Companies House and the Charity Commission.

## 2015/16 Running Costs

Below is a chart summarising the school's finances for the last financial year to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2015:

- Total potential income from fees was £1.4 million
- Of this income, we gave back approximately £160,000 in concessions, as community funded places, discounted fees to staff and sibling discounts.
- The largest single expense is salaries: around £800,000.
- Building running costs combined are around £220,000 a year. This includes rent, rates, insurance, utilities, health & safety and building maintenance.
- £110-£125 per child is spent per annum on class materials.
- The balance is spent on general overheads, including cleaning, IT, stationery, furniture and other capital items, training and professional and other fees.



# Parental Involvement

## Supporting the life of the School

Our school relies upon the active involvement of parents. There are many ways in which parents can help. These contributions together with the fees enable the school to function.

As a way of sustaining and nourishing the school community these contributions have many advantages:

- Children see their parents as part of the school, modelling co-operation. This is hugely beneficial to the child's sense of belonging and understanding of social cohesion.
- It provides a route for parents to get involved in the community, and to meet other parents.
- Tasks are done with love and care, which contributes to the school's special atmosphere.
- Parents can engage with each other and the school through a balance of practical work and formal meetings.

## Ways in which parents can expect to contribute

- Assisting the education in the following ways: accompanying the class on weekly outings, fund raising for class trips, accompanying class trips and making costumes and props for class plays.
- School workdays or jumble sales, fundraising letter writing, repairing and developing the fabric of the building, improving the grounds, general cleaning, packing up/ setting up classes and shared areas.
- Major fundraising events such as the advent and summer fairs (for which parents are asked to help on a stall and make goods to sell) and sponsored walks.

## How much involvement is expected?

It is our intention that all parents find a level of involvement that they feel happy with and are able to sustain. We appreciate that every family is different in terms of what they can offer. The school values every contribution or additional financial donation to the school.

Your class rep is your first point of contact for duties connected directly with your child's class and all school activities. Be pro-active - check with your class rep, read the newsletter and the communication boards.

More information on how to contribute to the life and development of the School will be available from the PTFA as it evolves during the current academic year. The PTFA will facilitate parental involvement within the School in order to further School development through initiatives such as fundraising and specific projects; it will also be a forum offering opportunities to parents to deepen their understanding of the education their children receive and for parents, teachers and friends to actively engage and work together in the service of the School.



## **Supporting the work of the Teachers**

For a general introduction to the valuable ways in which parents can support the teachers and the staff please refer to Appendix 8.

## **Television, Computers and DVD**

These are all embedded in our culture and taken for granted to such a degree that it is often difficult for us to question their value. Medical research shows that screen-based activity such as TV and computer games can have a negative effect on children (brain activity, concentration, heart-beat, emotional balance and well-being); the younger the child, the greater is this negative effect. It is important that TVs and computers are not kept in your child's room so that his/her bedroom is a place of rest. We ask parents to limit their children's exposure to media such as television, cinema, DVDs, computers and console games. Use of mobile phones and iPods should also be carefully monitored and restricted if appropriate.

By sending you child to our school will be making a considerable investment in both time and money. This investment in your child's education will be undermined by exposure to these media in their early years and childhood. For the well being of your child and to enable them to benefit from Waldorf education, please follow these guidelines

- Early Years: no regular screen-based activity/viewing
- Classes I to V: limited and monitored access to TV at weekends only  
no computer based activities.
- Classes VI to VIII: moderate, supervised access to TV at weekends  
moderate, supervised access to computer at weekends

## **Home Rhythms**

For both children and adults, modern life tends to lack rhythm, yet if we examine our lives, we see that rhythm plays an important role. We sleep and wake, we breathe in and out, and we pass through the seasons again and again. If the daily life of our children is chaotic – if, for example, their mealtimes are irregular or they are looked after by numerous carers- they are more likely to become jumpy and unsettled as a result of having to adjust continually to new situations. We ask therefore that parents create and maintain supportive rhythms in home life as far as possible. (For more on home rhythms, see Appendix 3)

## **Punctuality**

The School doors open at 8.15am and Main Lesson starts promptly at 8.30 am.

The school will willingly take responsibility for pupils 15 minutes prior to the start of Main Lesson and up to 15 minutes after the end of school, to accommodate unexpected delays. The Kindergartens open at 8.15am and end at 1pm. Children should be collected within 15 minutes of the end of their last lesson. Beyond this time the school must continue to accept responsibility for a pupil, but has limited resources to do so. Please call 0207 226 4454 if you are delayed in picking up your child and notify the teacher or the office in advance if your child is to be collected by someone other than their parent.

After a child has been handed over to its parents at the end of the day, the responsibility of the child becomes that of the parent who must ensure that the child observes the school rules and boundaries.

### **Absence from School**

When a child is absent from school, for whatever reason, parents/carers should telephone 0207 226 4454 by 8.30 am. If no one answers your call please leave a message on the answer phone, clearly stating who is reporting the absence, the name of the child, the class attended and the reason for the absence. You must call the school daily for as long as the illness lasts, unless otherwise agreed with the class teacher.

When the child returns to school, the parent/guardian must hand in or email to [absence@stpaulssteinerschool.org](mailto:absence@stpaulssteinerschool.org) a dated and signed note stating the reasons for absence to the teacher. This is required even when a phone call has been made. A doctor's medical certificate must be submitted for sickness lasting five days or more. Whenever possible, parents/guardians should make medical and dental appointments out of school hours. When this is not possible, teachers would appreciate a week's notice.

Absences of pupils are monitored and recorded. The class teacher will call a meeting with the parents/guardians if the absence level becomes a cause of concern. We are obliged to inform the Education Welfare Officer for the Local Authority if lateness or unauthorised absence doesn't improve after the parent/guardian has been notified.

### **Unnecessary Absence**

The law requires that parents ensure all children of compulsory school age receive full-time education during term-time. Unnecessary absences are educationally detrimental as children will miss vital content that cannot be caught up with at home.

Our holidays are longer than in state schools so we will not authorise pupils to be absent during term-time. In exceptional family circumstances, a pupil's absence may only be granted if requested in advance, in writing addressed to the Principal.

### **Standards of Behaviour in School**

All parents, teachers, children and other staff members are expected to behave with respect towards each other and their surroundings. The principles of the school's Positive Behaviour and Discipline Policy (see website and Appendix 7 for further information) are that:

- Children have a right to be cared for;
- Children have a right to learn;
- Teachers have a right to teach;
- Everyone has a right to be safe;
- Everyone has a right to be heard;
- Everybody has a right to grow and to make mistakes;
- Children should help look after each other and the environment;
- Children must allow others to learn;
- Children should do their best in school;

- All adults should maintain a safe environment;
- Everyone should listen.

If a parent has reason to believe that their child is being bullied, they should go straight to the child's teacher who will deal with the matter with the help of the parents and other teachers (for the school's bullying policy see the website or a reference copy is available from the reception).

### **Personal Property in School**

Radios, iPods, computer games, comics, magazines and toys should not be brought to school.

### **Dress Code**

There is no school uniform. Clothing with printed commercial motifs, pictures and combats and/or camouflage gear are not allowed. Parents are asked to ensure their children are dressed as follows and to mark all items with the child's name:

**Early Years:** practical, warm clothes appropriate to the season. You also need to supply the Kindergarten with the following items for the length of the academic year:

- Good quality waterproof (trousers and jacket)
- Wellington boots
- Slippers
- A winter hat
- A summer hat
- Winter gloves
- Sun cream
- A full set of spare clothes (underwear, socks, trousers and top)

**Classes I to III:** practical, warm clothes appropriate to the season. You also need to supply the School with the following items for the length of the academic year:

- Good quality waterproof (trousers and jacket)
- Wellington boots
- Plimsolls

**Classes IV to VIII:** Practical, warm clothes appropriate to the season. You also need to supply the School with the following items for the length of the academic year:

- A pair of indoor shoes
- Good quality waterproof (trousers and jacket)
- Good quality Gore-Tex walking shoes

### **Miscellaneous Classes II to VIII:**

Children from the middle school also need a towel for sailing lessons a good waterproof pair of trainers suitable for running (no Converse or indoor plimsolls)

Your Class Teacher will advise if it is necessary to purchase Eurythmy shoes.

Children may only wear one piece of simple jewellery. Earrings should be studs for Health and Safety reasons. Make-up and nail varnish are not permitted.

### **Food**

Each kindergarten has its own arrangements for mid-morning snack time but typically parents are asked to supply fruit and vegetables (organic where possible) for the children's snack. Each teacher will give full information at the beginning of term. If a child has special dietary needs, please ensure it is clearly stated on the consent form.

In the classes children should bring a mid-morning snack, a packed lunch and hot or cold drinks. The school encourages healthy eating and snacks and lunches should not include fizzy drinks, crisps or sweets and chocolates.

### **Equipment**

The school supplies necessary books, crayons, pencils, eurythmy shoes etc. A charge is made for recorders, regular fares (for example to Hampstead Heath), school outings and trips.

### **School Trips**

The classes have visits to places of interest such as museums and farms and to Steiner House for performances from time to time. Parents will be asked to cover the cost of fares and entrance fees, and one or more parents are usually needed to accompany the group. From Class II onwards children may be taken on camping trips - as a city school we try to give the children an experience of country life and the changing of the seasons. The school rules still apply to children and parents whilst on school trips and outings.

# School / Home Communication

We aim to establish good relations with parents and provide a focus for teacher to parent support, parent to teacher support and parent to parent support.

## Communication with Teachers

### **Parents Evenings**

Once a term each kindergarten and class teacher hosts an evening meeting for all the parents in the class to enable a deeper understanding of the Steiner curriculum. These are set out in the school calendar but may sometimes be subject to change, in which case you will be notified by the School. The teacher will address pedagogical questions, discuss issues concerning the development and progress of the class and gives a briefing on any forthcoming outings or events. We expect parents to attend the parents' evenings if at all possible.

### **Access to Teachers**

Good working relationships between teachers and parents are vital for the well being and progress of pupils at the school. However the school does not expect its staff to be available for consultations at home or in their private time. Each teacher should have a weekly timetabled surgery for meetings with parents, where the progress of the individual child and any issues may be discussed. Appointments should be made through the office or via the class notice board.

### **Home Visits**

Good communication between home and school is essential to the happy development of the child. To this end the class teachers place great value in seeing children in their own homes. Teachers arrange to visit their pupils at home from time to time and welcome invitations from parents for informal visits.

### **School Reports**

Reports are issued at the end of each year. They provide a deeper insight into the development of the child. The reports may give positive suggestions to the child for things to work towards for the coming year.

## Communication with the Wider School

### **Class Contacts**

Each class has one or two representatives, chosen from amongst the parents, who will pass on messages from the teacher to the parents, coordinate help required by the School, and help the teacher with the organisation of school trips.

### **The Friday Flyer**

This is the main source of School communication and we encourage all parents to read it regularly. It is published fortnightly and gives news and information about what is going on in the School generally, information from teachers for specific classes and reminders of important dates and upcoming events. There is also a section for small ads. Contributions

from parents and children are welcome – please submit by e-mail to the school office (schooloffice@stpaulssteinerschool.org) at least a week in advance of publication. There will be a small charge for advertisements.

### **The Website and E-mail Contact**

To save paper we prefer to communicate by e-mail. Please make sure that the school office always has your current e-mail address.

www.stpaulssteinerschool.org holds up to date information about the School's life, calendar, policies and minutes of meetings.

### **All-School Meetings**

All-school meetings are a forum to explore and discuss the needs and development of the school and review progress against the school's strategic aims.

### **Notice Boards**

Notice boards inside the School reception have details of the School's safeguarding officers, qualified First aiders etc. Please ask the School office if you can't find the information you want here or on our website. The notice boards in the garden are used for news and information. Notification of important current events will also be chalked up on the blackboards outside the kindergartens and on the board opposite the main entrance.

### **Text Service**

The school uses text service for short urgent communications. Please ensure we have your up to date mobile number.

# Welfare, Health and Safety

## Safeguarding Children: Child Protection

St Paul's Steiner School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Our child protection policy is found on the website and at reception.

## Health and Safety

St. Paul's Church houses a school but is also undergoing continuous renovation and construction. Every attempt is made to separate the building works from the educational activities on site, though sometimes this is not possible. The safety of the children at St. Paul's is paramount. We encourage everyone to be aware of their surroundings and take responsibility for their own safety as well as that of others. You are all asked to be careful and vigilant, to supervise the children and to bring any perceived or possible danger to the attention of the office. During phases of intense construction work, or work affecting areas where the children regularly go, there may be special safety practices and procedures in operation.

- The garden space at the St Paul's roadside of the school is out of bounds and so are the workshops outside the church.
- The school gate in Marquess Road should be kept closed at all times.
- The wooden gates to the Kindergarten gardens are to be kept closed at all times
- Children must remain in the school grounds throughout the day unless given permission to do otherwise.
- Children must not climb on walls or fences.
- Children must not run inside the building.
- Classrooms and kindergarten gardens are out of bounds after school hours.

## Safety Procedures

Fire drills are carried out at regular intervals throughout the year. If you are helping in the school please make yourself familiar with the fire procedures. **It is important that you sign yourself in (and out) of the Visitors Book held at reception.** You should know where the fire exits and fire extinguishers are, and be prepared to help the teacher usher the children from the classroom to the assembly point in Marquess Road.

## First Aid

There are several first-aiders in the school. A list of people qualified to administer first aid is posted on the school notice board and on the kindergarten notice boards.

If a pupil has a minor accident or feels unwell during school time, his or her teacher will care for the child. Children who appear to be too unwell to work are brought to the school office. They will then be seen by a member of the office staff trained in first aid. We are not permitted to give any medication unless prior arrangements have been made and written parental permission given.

If the child seems too unwell to remain at school, then parents will be contacted and asked to take the child home. If an accident is of a more serious nature, the child will be taken directly

to the nearest hospital (Whittington Hospital) and the parents will be informed. Every class has a First Aid Kit and there are also kits in the office.

Every incident requiring treatment is documented in our accident book. Parents will be notified if their child has been entered in the accident book and will be asked to sign the relevant accident record by way of acknowledgement of the treatment given to the child if they come into school. At enrolment, parents will be asked to complete a consent form for medical treatment. Please make sure that we are kept up to date with emergency telephone numbers.

### **Administration of Medicine**

Medication should be brought into school clearly labelled with the details of when and how much should be taken. The child's name should be clearly written on the label. It should be left for safekeeping with the school office. All children who use inhalers should also leave a spare inhaler with the school office clearly labelled with the student's name.



# School Policies

The school has policies covering the following:

- Accidents, Sicknesses and Incidents
- Accident Book
- Admissions
- Administration of Medication
- Anti Bullying
- Arrival and Departure
- Behaviour – positive Behaviour and Discipline
- Candle Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Complaints Procedure
- Concerns Procedure
- Curriculum
- Cyber bullying
- English as an Additional Language
- DBS
- Equal Opportunities - Employment
- Finance Policy
- First Aid Box
- Health and Safety
- Intimate Care and Toileting
- Lost Children
- No Smoking
- Planning
- Pupil Assessment
- Pupils File and Reports
- Recruitment (Safer)
- Sabbatical
- School Trips and Outings
- Special Education Needs
- Staff Assessment
- Timescales for Keeping Data
- Whistle blowing: Public Interest Disclosure

*Some of the above policies are published on our website and all are available at reception.*

## Concerns and Complaints

We work on the basis that problems brought to light through the concerns and complaints process are opportunities for the school to become a better place for children to learn. Please see Appendix 10 for the flowchart that gives an overview of the Concerns and Complaints Procedure. The full policy is available on our website, at reception and it is sent to the parents at the beginning of every academic year.

Please do not hesitate to contact the School Office should you have any questions. Details of how to contact relevant members of staff can also be found on the School website and in the School's communication policy.

# Appendix 1 - Recommended Reading

The list below is reading recommended for adults wishing to learn more about the education.

- T. Finser, *School as a Journey; the eight-year Odyssey of a Waldorf teacher and his class*, Anthroposophical Press
- A.C. Harwood, *The Way of a Child*, Sophia Books
- F. Carlgren, *Education Towards Freedom*, Lanthorne Press
- B. Barz, *Festivals with Children*, Floris Books
- C. Clouder and M. Rawson, *Waldorf Education: A basic introduction to the Steiner Waldorf School*, Floris Books
- J. Salter, *The Incarnating Child*, Hawthorn Press
- F. Edmunds, *Rudolf Steiner Education*, Rudolf Steiner Press
- Rudolf Steiner, *Education of the Child*, Rudolf Steiner Press
- Rudolf Steiner, *Kingdom of the Child*, Rudolf Steiner Press
- *My feet can talk, my hands can sing, Eurythmy at the Waldorf School*, Hogeschool Helicon
- J.C. Arnold, *Endangered; your child in a hostile world*, Plough Publishing
- B. Lievegoed, *Phases of Childhood*, Floris Books
- R.J.S. Blunt, *Waldorf Education: theory and practice*, Novalis Press
- C. Harwood, *The Recovery of Man in Childhood*, Rudolf Steiner Press

Books available from Rudolf Steiner House

## Appendix 2 – Festivals

Celebrating festivals is a central aspect of Steiner school life. The annual rhythm of the festivals fosters a deep sense of our relationship to the earth through all its seasons.

Festivals provide a welcome opportunity for the whole school community to get together and parents are actively encouraged to join in. They are social events as well as giving space for inner reflection, bringing warmth to the relationship between school and home. In our festivals, we remind our whole community about the importance of taking joy in the world we live in. We garland the school with nature's bounty: flowers, boughs of blossom or greenery, leaves, beechnuts, conkers, depending on the season. We celebrate with music, stories and songs, and often with shared food. Each festival is associated with a particular colour, which the children wear to reflect their shared experience, and each contains a deeper meaning, relevant to our journey through the year.

## Appendix 3 - The Importance of Rhythm

If we examine our own lives, we see that rhythm plays an important role. We sleep and wake, we breathe in and out, and we pass through the seasons again and again. We soon feel the detrimental effect of any major disturbance to these rhythms: if our breathing is interfered with, we panic. If we are deprived of sleep, we feel disorientated and we lack creativity and initiative.

So it is for our children. If their daily life is chaotic – if, for example, their mealtimes are irregular or they are looked after by lots of different people they are more likely to become jumpy and unsettled as a result of having to adjust continually to new situations.

For both children and adults, modern life is lacking in rhythm. We are no longer affected, for example, by natural rhythms. When it grows dark, we switch on a light, and when it is cold, we put on the heating rather than go out and chop wood. We can have lettuce and strawberries for Christmas, shop at any time, go swimming in winter and have hot baths whenever we like, and gone are many of the jobs which involve repeated rhythmical activity, so that children rarely watch cows being milked, butter being churned or wool being spun.

Having a special corner at home for treasures found on walks - twigs and flowers, shells and stones – and for seasonal pictures, can be enriching and fun. Lighting a candle before a meal or bedtime, saying a simple grace or bedtime prayer, helps children to find their place in the day.

With all children it is helpful, for example, to do music practice at the same time each day, to have a regular homework or reading time, to have meals at regular times and to have a set bedtime and a particular job or task to carry out daily at a certain time.

Through such experiences, a real feeling of security is built up in the children, which enables them to move through the complex world in which they live feeling more confident and at ease, while they have greater forces available to them for the development of their capacities. In bringing a flexible and creative rhythm into daily living, our children receive a gift, which will be of value to them throughout their lives.

## Appendix 4 – Eurythmy

Eurythmy is an expressive movement art originated by Rudolf Steiner and Marie von Sivers. Pedagogically its purpose is to awaken and strengthen the expressive capacities of children through movement. Steiner pointed out how the creative movements used in language and music are related to the creative forces active in both nature and the human body.

When doing eurythmy, the body becomes an instrument, making visible what otherwise is only audible, namely music and speech. It requires that we become inwardly mobile. When we hear sounds, we are taken along into continuous change, from high to low, from soft to loud. We are also carried along on the course of a melody, in changes of melody and melodic moods and in the subtleties of spoken language. In eurythmy these changes and their related inner movements are made manifest by movements of the body. This is done both individually and in groups.

The awareness of one's own body is the beginning of self-knowledge. This awareness is acquired by being active, by moving. For children this means that through movement, they become aware of their own functioning. Through movement and activity they get to know their environment and become acquainted with the things around. In all their movements, in which they interact with their surroundings, their own body is the firm reference point.

While thinking, we move both physically and mentally. The inner movements we make while thinking can be compared to the outer movements we make while physically exploring something. In Steiner education these two processes are continually interconnected. Not just because children like to move, through which their motivation to attend school and learn is extended, but especially because learning processes backed up by movement obtain meaning. Thinking and doing are connected.

In eurythmy gestures we visualise the movement of the creative forces that precede language and music. We enter into the moment at which language and music are still incipient. When we sing we are able to sense this movement, while going from one tone to the next. Singing the first tone, we inwardly already move towards the following one. This is especially noticeable when we are still in the process of mastering a piece of music. We then perceive how the subsequent tone must first be found; the movement toward it must be discovered before that tone can sound in tune. These are the same creative movements as the ones we visualise with our entire body in eurythmy. During the eurythmy lessons the children have, through their own movements, entered into the creative movements of language and music.

## Appendix 5 - The Governance Structure

There are two Charities covering activities at this site: **St Paul's Steiner Project Limited** (Charity No. 1037313) is responsible for the restoration and maintenance of the building, and hosting community classes and cultural events in The Nave. **St Paul's Steiner Project Two Limited** (Charity No. 1076454) is responsible for the running of the School.

### Trustees

Trustees of both Charities have overall legal responsibility; they are responsible for ensuring that the charity is run in accordance with its stated its primary objectives of the Charities and its assets protected.

The Trustees are selected (and may be removed) by the Members of the Association (see below) or co-opted by other Trustees. They meet twice a term.

### Association Members

Association members are equivalent to 'shareholders' in companies with shares. They hold the Trustees to account and are able to nominate, elect or remove Trustees according to the terms of the Articles of Association. They have powers to call general meetings of the Association. The Association Membership is drawn from past and present members of St Paul's parents, teachers and friends. They meet annually at the AGM and from time to time if there is an EGM.

## Appendix 6 - TV, Videos, Computer Games

TV is embedded in our culture and taken for granted to such a degree that it is often difficult for us to question its value. Similarly, with the increasing prominence of cinema, the personal computer and video games and their adoption into everyday life, rarely is a dissenting voice heard. However it is widely held amongst those involved in Steiner education, as well as by researchers in the USA (see recommended reading in Appendix 1), that watching TV and videos and playing computer games are detrimental to the healthy development of the child. Our reasons for this are:

1. All children have an innate imaginative capacity and their natural state is to be active in this. This is one of the great gifts of childhood and crucial for their healthy journey into adulthood, when children acquire other faculties. As they do so, this capacity, is usually lost or transformed, never to be re-lived in the same way. TV, videos and/or computer games make children unhealthily 'still' and stifle their own imaginations. By presenting the child with 'finished' images, the child is required to do no inner work (or active play) and their imagination is 'disabled' whilst watching. Afterwards, this can result in listlessness, lack of initiative and boredom; children may need to be constantly entertained. Alternatively, it may result in children being over-stimulated to such an extent that they can no longer listen properly to real people. They switch on or off as they please. It is felt that this kind of stimulation is in fact *deprivation* for the child's own abundant creative abilities.
2. Through our education, we encourage children's natural capacity to be highly sensitive to their environment and the people around them. They are, therefore, deeply susceptible to being mesmerised; they cannot filter their absorption of the things they see and hear. We are careful in both the kindergarten and school to present material in a way appropriate to their age and sensibilities. By contrast, frequently, the quality of children's material on TV, videos and computers is very poor. They force images and noises of all kinds upon the child which are in our view inappropriate – the children may become desensitised as their threshold for violence, noise, aesthetics, moral and social behaviours – you name it – lowers. Young children do not have the discrimination to regulate their own watching. They are not yet able to know what is good for them and what is not, and they depend on the adults around them for guidance, to imitate and to decide the boundaries which will protect them (in all areas of life, not just this one) until they can freely take care of themselves.

Furthermore, the images that flash past on the screen are not connected to real life – they are an artificial representation of life and, as such, abstract. One cannot relate to TV. By contrast, in a Steiner school, the teachers do not use textbooks – they seek to give stories and lesson content from memory through an oral/aural tradition so that the communication exchange is real and alive. Children live vividly in the present and to be healthy they need to feel deeply connected to the world around them in the class teacher years. They do not have the intellectual sophistication to cope healthily with this abstract phenomenon. TV et al literally undo the work we do at our school.



# Appendix 7 - School Positive Behaviour Standards

## **How We Treat Each Other:**

- Children and adults should be courteous and positive to all members of the School community and to the general public.
- Everyone should respect their own and others' belongings.
- Everyone should abide by the School's equal opportunities policy.
- We will not tolerate bullying or harassment by anyone.

## **Boundaries of the School and Our play**

- During school hours, children should remain in school grounds.
- Out of school hours, children should not enter the classrooms.
- Children should be delivered to and picked up from school on time.
- Children may not climb school walls.
- Class children are not allowed in the Kindergarten garden.
- Kicking games are not allowed and throwing games should be supervised.
- Children should follow the school classroom rules.
- Children are not allowed on the climbing frame unless supervised by a teacher.
- Riding bicycles, skateboards, scooters and roller blades/skates are not allowed in the school grounds.

## **Property and Appearance**

- Children are not permitted to bring to school: knives, fireworks, lighters, matches, toys, CD/ tape/iPods, mobile phones (unless agreed with teacher in advance), chewing gum, sweets, chocolate, crisps or sugary/ fizzy drinks.
- No clothes with logos, pictures or combat decoration are acceptable.
- Jewellery should be kept to an absolute minimum with no dangling or protruding parts.
- Make-up, nail varnish and dyed hair are not allowed.

## **Classroom School Rules**

- I will be in my place and be quiet at the beginning of the lesson.
- I will respond to everyone in a positive and polite fashion.
- I will strive to solve any misunderstandings or difficulties in a positive and polite fashion.
- I will listen whilst others are talking.
- I will not call out during lessons.
- I will raise my hand to answer/attract attention.
- I will not pass notes during lessons.
- I will not eat food or chew gum during lessons.
- I will be ready to close the lesson as my teacher directs.

## Appendix 8 - Parents' Responsibilities

Sending your child to a Steiner school involves a commitment to the education, the school community and its ethos. It is important to understand the values underpinning the school, and to support the curriculum at home. The holistic approach of Steiner education is about parenting as well as formal education, making your role within your child's education as important as the teacher's.

Familiarising yourself with Steiner's views on child development will enable you to support this education through suitable rhythms and nourishment at home.

Steiner education aims to educate the whole child, "head, heart and hands" "to produce individuals who are able, in and of themselves, to impart meaning to their lives".

As a parent or guardian, you are responsible for participating in your child's education by:

- Reading the Parents' Handbook, school newsletters, pupil reports and other information sent out by the school;
- Regularly attending school talks and workshops designed to support this educational model and child development;
- Attending Parents' Evenings (1 per term) and discussions about his/her progress;
- Making the school aware, through the kindergarten/class teacher of circumstances that might affect your child's work or behaviour;
- Protecting your child from unsuitable and unmonitored access to media such as television, cinema, DVDs, computers and console games, internet websites and chat rooms. Use of mobile phones and iPods should also be carefully monitored and restricted if appropriate: the younger the child, the greater the effect. For the well-being of your child and to enable him/her to benefit from Steiner education, please allow no regular screen-based activity/watching in the Early Years, Classes I to V – limited and monitored access only at weekends and no computer based activities. From Class VI – moderate and supervised access at weekends;
- Enabling your child to see the School Doctor at the school's request and taking your child to any therapy sessions, special needs assessments, or one-on-one specialist literacy or numeracy sessions as required by the school. This type of request would only occur after several conversations with the class teacher. The sessions may incur an additional cost. This could be necessary to support the child accessing the education, to support the teachers' ability to meet his/her needs and the needs of the class/school;
- Co-operating with the teachers in their efforts to address challenging behaviour, including supporting the School's policies on behaviour and discipline;
- Ensuring your child: attends regularly, on time, is dressed appropriately for the season and activity and does not wear commercial logos, pictures or camouflage;
- Refraining from booking holidays during term time;
- In case of sickness, notifying the school office by 8:30 am on each day of absence and confirming this in writing when the child returns to school;
- Communicating effectively and reasonably with members of staff, using the schools agreed procedures to communicate with teachers.

You are responsible for supporting the community in its needs and aims by:

- Paying fees and any additional costs promptly;
- Attending All School Meetings;
- Participating in the life of the school by taking part in school fundraising activities, cleaning, school workdays, and class support and so on, as outlined in the practical contribution commitment.

## Appendix 9 - Guide To Kindergarten

We are delighted to welcome you and your child to Kindergarten. Here we offer a bridge between the quiet heart of the home and the broad open spaces of the school and life to come.

In our beautiful kindergartens the children grow in a secure caring homely environment, surrounded by quality toys and materials which allows the children to develop physical and social skills and creative impulses together with imagination and fantasy which all help to form a foundation for a healthy life.

As well as a place for your child to make new friends, we hope that you will also make new friends. WELCOME!

### **The Steiner Ideal in the Early Years**

In the first phase the active or *will* aspect predominates, in the second the affective or *feeling* and in the third the cognitive or *thinking*.

### **Early Learning Adapted to the Individual Child**

Children who suffer early pressure to meet early and unnecessary intellectual targets often lack the will and enthusiasm later to study for themselves. We want to protect the faculties of feeling and willing by not forcing formal learning. Any education that neglects children's feelings runs the risk of creating emotionally bankrupt adults.

The carefully structured environment is designed to foster personal and social learning. During the early years we teach by example and learning is integrated rather than subject-based. Our curriculum aims to adapt itself to the child. This takes time and the children in our kindergartens are given time to unfold at their own pace.

We believe that children whose needs are met, who are valued and not hurried through their childhood, are more likely to become well-adjusted adults who succeed in life and are able to contribute to society.

### **Learning through Creative Play**

Young children are gifted players and imitators. These creative faculties, which appear shortly after birth and recede at around seven, are the child's personal pedagogues. The Steiner Waldorf teacher co-operates and works with these powerful educational forces. Respect for the wisdom of childhood and for the child's unique mode of experiencing and learning is the first step towards affirming the inner child.

Each day in our kindergartens some time is dedicated to free creative play. Studies demonstrate that good players show more empathy towards others and have less aggression; are able to see things from the perspective of the other, and show less signs of fear, sadness and fatigue. Play also strengthens the imagination. Through play children are able to exercise and consolidate their ability to understand and think and to develop and strengthen their concentration. Creative play supports physical, emotional and social

development and allows children to learn through investigation, exploration and discovery. It encourages children to become inventive and adaptable.

### **Learning through Imitation**

We are a community of 'doers' and our work is a combination of practical and artistic activity. We garden, clean and cook; we bake our own bread together and share and eat it at meal-times. Children love to help and develop a wide range of motor skills.

The presence of a working adult creates an atmosphere which helps the children to become independently active, to find their own learning situations through play. To see an adult at work, perhaps in the activity of carving a spoon, in which care, skill, concentration and perseverance are all demanded, is a wonderful example to the ever-watchful child – a lesson in the sustained application of will-power.

Implicit in everything we do but also in how we do it – is the value base of the teacher. How we handle our tools and materials, even our gestures and body language, are all registered and internalised by the child. The teacher who sets the example may then have certain expectations of the children.

A variety of songs, stories and poems including verses in French, German or other languages are learnt naturally by 'heart' not 'head'. Our children develop good memories, which do not depend on the printed word. The forces of imitation naturally diminish and give way to a new kind of knowing after 6 years old. Only then, when we feel the children have reached a stage of maturity and are genuinely 'school-ready', do we begin formal instruction.

### **Integrated Learning**

Children's learning experiences gain meaning by their relevance to life. We provide opportunities for learning which are embedded within the business of daily living. In an integrated context children have a unified experience of the world and are able to gather strength and security from it.

Maths in the Waldolf kindergarten might take place at the cooking table where food is being prepared. Thinly sliced carrots make wonderful natural circles, each containing its own tiny 'sun' which appears when held up to the light. The carrot can also be cut, chopped, cubed and counted and has the added virtue of being able to be eaten later in soup! Maths is encountered not as an abstraction but serving human needs.

### **Speech and Language**

In a secure environment, children speak freely and learn to listen to others. We concentrate on the oral tradition by telling many stories. A well told story creates an appreciation for the human voice and the beauty and rhythms of language. It also helps to extend vocabulary and aids the development of a good memory and a rich imagination.

Fairy tales and nature stories address the feeling realm and awaken a fine moral sense. Puppet shows by the teachers and children develop dramatic skills through narrative and dialogue. Children also sing together, and take part in eurythmy – movement which works with language and music.

### **The Importance of Rhythm**

Steiner Waldorf kindergartens identify rhythm as an important educational principle. Children need the reassurance of continuity and regular events punctuate the kindergarten year, week and day. Seasonal activities celebrate the cycles of the year. The seasonal area reflects the changing natural world throughout the year, as do the themes of our songs, stories and poems.

Each week has its own regular rhythm of recurring activities: baking day, painting day, and gardening day.

Every day has its own smaller rhythms. These help the child to feel secure and to know what to expect; a tidy-up song for example, might signal the end of one activity and the beginning of another. The day is structured so that there is a varied pace with periods of contraction and expansion providing a balance between times of activity and times of rest. Each day has a special time – a quiet moment to experience reverence. Celebrating a variety of festivals together provides an opportunity for rich cultural and religious experiences and involves the wider community.

There is a rhythmic alteration between the child's time (creative play, outside time) and the teacher's time (ring-time, story) – the teacher's time being short at this age. Working with rhythm helps children to live with change, to find their place in the world, and to begin to understand the past, present and future. Attention to rhythm promotes healthy development and leads to a balanced life later.

### **The Importance of Repetition**

Repetition also plays a key role in establishing continuity and aids the development of memory which is strengthened by recurring experiences. Daily, weekly and yearly events are remembered, and eagerly anticipated a second time round and stories are told not just once, but many times. Repetition brings the opportunity for children to familiarise themselves with the material and to deepen their relationship to it.

## **The Daily Routine**

Each Kindergarten has a similar routine during the morning. The child is welcomed into the room by the teacher, with a quick word or wave to the departing parent and begins with...

**Creative play** that is child initiated, using the furniture, natural toys, logs, soft cloths, houses and dolls. Chairs, for example, become a train, shop and restaurant. A puppet show may be performed from which children are able to re-create, learn from and play out what they have seen or experienced. There is also plenty of opportunity for the children out of their own initiative to do various crafts such as sewing, weaving, drawing, woodwork or preparation of the snack.

**Tidy time** is an integral part of the morning activity. We meet the puppet Tidy Gnome for conversation, taking care to greet and listen to each other before we make a bowl for our raisins, which will “help us tidy today”. The raisins often get counted as they are eaten, and then we get our fingers ready with a seasonal finger game before we work together - sorting,

cleaning and making sure everything is in its rightful place before play can begin anew the next day.

**Activity time** follows, and we work together - making bread, muesli or soup for our mealtimes, doing crafts using seasonal materials (to be played with, used, hung around the room or taken home to be enjoyed by the family). We draw, paint, model with clay or beeswax and much more. It is a lively enjoyable time where the children have the opportunity to develop many skills.

At **Ring time** we make a circle together, and through songs, poems, finger plays and ring games, joyfully experience our bodies, the seasons, the animals and people that make up our world. The repeated ring time aids the children's memory as they sing, act and move each day.

**Eurythmy** is enjoyed by all when we are visited by a trained eurythmist wherever possible.

**Snack Time:** At mid-morning, after we have washed our hands, we sit down and eat together (at a table set with care) usually the food, which children have helped to prepare. Healthy bread (baked together), fresh produce from our organic garden, muesli, porridge or soup and fresh fruit, together with water, herb tea, apple juice or milk. We say a 'thank you' together for our food, we share or serve each other, we listen and are heard in a social gathering.

**Outside Play:** Then it is time for the children to go outside, to play, run, climb, skip, dig, or work in the vegetable gardens - time to test their physical limits, stretch limbs and develop new skills.

**Story Time:** The morning ends with a story told by the teacher where the children listen and fill their imaginations with pictures of the seasonal story, folk or fairy tale. The stories are often repeated so that they are first an adventure, and then become a friend and companion - a gift for the child's growing soul.

**At Home Time:** The child is handed back into the care of the parent or carer, with perhaps a quick word about the child's day.

The child is reassured by the recurring rhythm of the day, the week and the year through repetition of seasonal activities, festivals and songs. The structure and security of the Kindergartens form the basis for a deep confidence, a bridge between the home and the busy world outside, and form a foundation for a healthy social adult life.

Our regular weekly activities are:

<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
Baking	Painting	Crafts	Cooking	Other activities

It is possible that these activities may be changed around to other days depending on the teachers, and the needs of the particular group of children. However, you will be informed at your kindergarten of your child's weekly activities.

### **Birthday Celebrations**

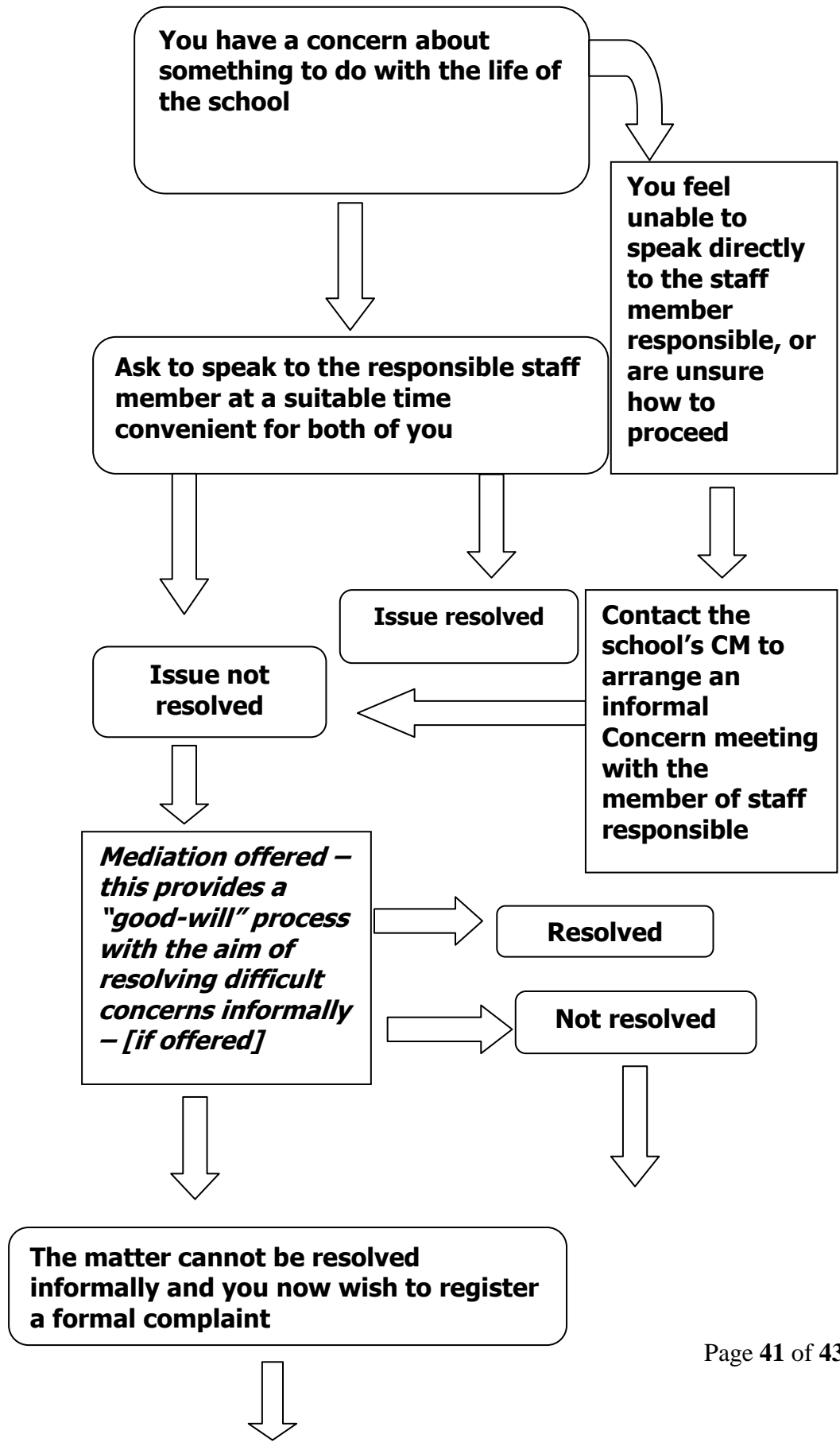
Birthdays are very special at the Kindergarten where they are celebrated as individual festivals helping to create for the child a picture of their own life. Parents are invited to bring a cake and share a special story and celebration.



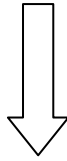
**APPENDIX 10**

**Form A1**

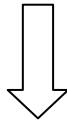
**Flowchart – Overview for Concerns and Complaints Procedure  
Informal Concerns:**



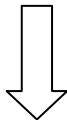
**The matter cannot be resolved informally and you now wish to register a formal complaint**



**Write to the School's Complaints Mandate. Please use the Formal Complaint Notification Form whenever possible. The Chair of Trustees will be informed on receipt. Your form should be acknowledged within 24 hours of receipt**



**CM carries out investigation and an investigative meeting is arranged with you. Investigation completed and report published to those involved, normally within 10 working days**



**The report and recommendations are satisfactory**



**The report and recommendations are not satisfactory**



**You write to the Chair of Trustees to call for a Review Hearing (panel) to adjudicate on your appeal  
Panel formed and Chair contacts you to inform you of process  
Panel takes place (see outline procedure)  
Final adjudication issued**

# Contacts

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Payments to Sort Code 08-92-99 Account number 65296118

The Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) for child protection is Angelita Ravizzoli and the Designated Deputy Safeguarding Leads (DDSL) for child protection is Elena Oliver Andres. Please telephone the office if you need to speak to them or hand in a letter at reception. Do not email regarding safeguarding issues.

Website [www.stpaulssteinerschool.org](http://www.stpaulssteinerschool.org)

Latest SIS Report

[http://www.stpaulssteinerschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/St Pauls Steiner report for publication.pdf](http://www.stpaulssteinerschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/St-Pauls-Steiner-report-for-publication.pdf)