

LANCASTER STEINER SCHOOL

PARENT HANDBOOK 2009/2010

3RD DRAFT

LANCASTER STEINER SCHOOL, LUNE ROAD, LANCASTER, LA1 5QU
(01524) 841351
lancastersteinerschool@yahoo.co.uk
www.lancastersteiner.org.uk

HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL

At Lancaster Steiner School our vision is to provide our children with a sound schooling experience as the foundation for lifelong health and learning. To realise this aim we draw upon the innovative approach and world-wide experience of Steiner Waldorf education, the fast growing alternative to mainstream education.

Steiner education in Lancaster began in 1990 when a group of committed parents worked together to develop Rainbow Toddlers for 0–3 year olds. Since then the project has grown, extending the education for children up to the age of 14 with the formation of Cherry Trees Kindergarten in 1994 (3–6 years) and Lancaster Steiner School in 1999 (6–14 years old). At the time the school was based at Middlewood, Roeburndale but in 2002 the school and kindergarten moved to its current location in a 120 year old building, which was formerly a Methodist Chapel.

The School is registered with the Steiner Waldorf Schools Federation and has links with York and Botton Village Steiner Schools.

INTRODUCTION TO STEINER EDUCATION

Across the world Steiner Waldorf schools share a distinctive curriculum and teaching method. Their establishment and growth began when Rudolf Steiner an Austrian philosopher, scientist and educator, outlined a syllabus and pedagogy based on an essentially holistic understanding of the nature and development of the human being.

The first school to practise this new form was started in Stuttgart, Germany in 1919 and, as it was sponsored by the Waldorf–Astoria tobacco factory, was called a Waldorf School. Since its inception, the Waldorf movement has grown considerably and there are now over 958 schools, 1600 Early Years settings and 60 Teacher Training Courses world wide.

In the UK Steiner Schools, Early Years Settings and Steiner Teacher Training Courses are all represented by the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship (SWSF) (www.steinerwaldorf.org.uk).

some key characteristics of Steiner Education are:

An approach that honours, protects and nurtures the essential nature of childhood, providing education in accord with the developmental needs of the children (formal education begins age 6, in line with mainstream practice in many European countries);

Emphasis on educating the whole child – intellectual, social, emotional and spiritual – by engaging their heads, hearts and hands;

Delivers a broad based curriculum in which subjects are linked together and taught in a wider context through creative methods of teaching addressing many aspects of intelligence and the child's ability to learn:

The curriculum is geared to the developmental needs of the child. The teachers shape the subject matter to suit the experience, abilities and individual qualities of their particular classes;

Fosters co-operation and non-competitive learning, not by measuring children against one another, but against their own potential;

Strives to imbue pupils with social awareness and responsibility; to respect the environment and the unique value of each individual;

Develops confident, articulate and flexible individuals;

Schools are learning communities of parents and teachers working co-operatively in support of children's education;

In academic exams, further education and employment opportunities Steiner students compare favourably with their contemporaries from other schools;

Steiner graduates are appreciated for their independent minds, flexible thinking, creativity and resourcefulness and noted for their contributions to society and culture.

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide an education which seeks to bring out the unique abilities of each and every child, to develop a love for beauty and truth and equip the child to seek and find their own place in the world.

Lancaster Steiner School is inspired by the holistic picture of the human being given by Rudolf Steiner. This picture acknowledges that the child is a threefold being of body, soul and spirit and that this must be taken into account in education.

Every child is unique, and whilst comparison of ability can provide a superficial degree of consistency it is important to respect that which is different in each one. This is also true of the parents. As such we do not strive for hierarchy for the sake of it but rather seek to work together as equal members of the school community, in such a way that the unique contribution of each person can be acknowledged and respected. In this way we strive to be as inclusive as possible and encourage parental interest and involvement in the running of our school and in the development of our school community.

The Lancaster Steiner School is committed to the principle of lifelong learning, with respect to the teachers, parents and friends and to learning for life, with respect to the children. We see life as a journey and education as a creative social force. As such education does not stop at the school gates, nor does it exclude the practicalities of everyday life. A creative education is a social force that equips the human being with the capacity and initiative to meet future challenges in a unique way.

We strive to meet the unique inner being of each and every child. As a result learning becomes an experience full of joy and wonder. If the child experiences that their needs are met and that they are listened to then school becomes a confidence-building place.

Physical activity is a key component of our education curriculum in which movement and the development of practical and artistic skills serves to complement and enhance the development of the thinking. In this respect outdoor work and activity complements the work done in the classroom.

Education is by example and continual assessment. There is less emphasis on competitive testing which, by its very nature, cannot acknowledge the unique abilities of each and every child. The true test is that the child will learn to love that which is beautiful and that which is true and will, out of a developed self-initiative, seek to find their own place and to make their own contribution in the world.

SCHOOL STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION

Overview

Steiner Schools are run co-operatively; the staff and parents work together sharing responsibilities for the good of the children and the school.

This co-operative way of working is often challenging as it engenders a sense of shared responsibility that can be demanding at times. Such challenges embody our expectations of the pupils to accept responsibility for the ways in which they work together. However, parents will tell you that the time and effort spent in such work and relationships is rewarding for themselves as well as for their child's education and development.

ADMINISTRATION

The Council of Trustees (or School Council as it's more commonly known)

The Trustees have responsibility for the legal, financial and employment areas of the School. Any member of the Company can be nominated and elected at the Trust AGM (the Company can be joined by filling in a simple form available from the office – parents also need to be a Company member to vote at the AGM)

The Council of Trustees for 2009/2010 are as follows:

Bruno Jackson – Chair
Julia Russell
Mark Bamford
Richard Nutter
Helen Harvey
Deanne Bell

Council meets on a Tuesday every month. The Agenda and Minutes of these meetings are available on the notice board by the main front door. If you would like something raised at a Council meeting please contact the Administrator.

If any parent/guardian wishes to contact Bruno Jackson, Chair of Trustees his telephone number is 07528218830.

The College of Teachers

The College is responsible for the Pedagogical/Educational Policy making of the School. All Lower School class and Kindergarten teachers form the College and work together on a weekly basis. They are responsible for admissions, maintaining standards in the curriculum, and all other areas relating to learning and teaching and the day to day running of the School.

The College meet once a week on a Wednesday to discuss and review their work, educational requirements and related administrative requirements.

If you have any concerns, a problem, need some information or wish to have something discussed at the meeting, please contact the Administrator or Secretary via the School office or talk to your Class or Kindergarten teacher.

Administrator

The Administrator holds responsibility for management of the school and works with the College of Teachers, Council of Trustees and members of the small groups detailed below .
The School Office is run by the Administrator assisted by the Secretary. The office is open Monday to Thursday 8.45am to 3.15pm, 8.45am to 12.45pm on Fridays.

Sub Groups

Currently there are a number of sub groups and individuals that are accountable to The Trustees and liaise with the Administrator. All parents are requested to join one of the following groups to enable all aspects of the school to continue improving.

Employment –main contact, Deborah Bellaby
Finance – main contact, Richard Nutter
Fund-raising (grants) – currently dormant
Fundraising (festivals and events) – main contact, Joanne Bretherton
Premises and Maintenance –main contact, Simon Lewis
Festivals – currently dormant
Garden – currently dormant

The Office has an up-to-date list of which parents are part of these groups and when they meet. Please contact the School Office if you would like to see more information about joining any of these or would like to see the Minutes (some items discussed at these groups will be sensitive, so Minutes , if released, will always protect the individuals privacy)

Policies and procedures

The school has the following Policies that meet statutory requirements:

Admissions
Behaviour and Promoting Good Behaviour
Child Protection
Complaints
CRB and Recruitment
Disability and Equality
Equal Opportunities
Fire
Health and Safety

Copies of these are available to read as part of the Parent file kept by the 'late' book near the front entrance. They are also in the process of being put onto the school website.

Please note that these documents can't be taken off site or copied to take away.

STAFF

The following people work in the school, either in paid positions or voluntarily

Kindergarten

Denise Randall – teacher
Julie Harris – teaching assistant
Jasmin Brackenfield – p/t assistant
Barbera Kanzler – p/t assistant

Lower School teachers

Su Eastham Class 1
Rowan Brook-Thompson – Class 2/3/4
Louise Duirwyn – Class 5

Sessional teachers

Mark Bamford – form drawing/woodwork
Nicky Snell – German
John Rogers – allotment gardening

School Office

Alice Granger – administrator
Rebecca Wheten – secretary

Afternoon Club

Joanne Bretherton
Barbera Kanzler – assistant
Jasmin Brackenfield – assistant

Cleaner

Patricia Anthony

Rainbow Toddler Group

Sarah Deakin

Parents may request details of staff qualifications fromm the school office

Volunteers contacts

School shop – Rebecca Wheten
Library – Sarah Deakin
Fundraising (Complimentary Health Fair) – Julia Russell or Karin Olson

THE RAINBOW PARENT AND TODDLER GROUP

When: Monday and Friday 10:00am to 12:00pm

Where: Lancaster Friends' Meeting House

What: Parent & Child Play Group

Who: Children from 0 to 3.5 years old and their parents/carers

How much : Fridays £4.50 per session if one child, £5 if two or more children from same family

Mondays are by registration only and families need to commit to pay and attend all sessions in a half term. £4.50 per session if one child and the rate for more than one child is yet to be decided. Attend all sessions in a half term and get one session free.

Purpose/Philosophy:

The Rainbow Parent and Toddler Group is a Steiner playgroup based on the philosophy of Rudolf Steiner. You will see this philosophy reflected in many ways – the environment created is visually gentle and harmonious, soft pastel shade fabrics are used and toys are made from natural materials and are very simple.

The sessions always follow the same rhythm, and all elements contribute to an environment of warmth and stability where children are free to unfold and develop their imaginations and a sense of wonder and interest in the world.

Compared to much contemporary thinking the Steiner philosophy moves children more slowly towards the intellectual world of the adult. The gentle environment and home-like routines protect the children's sense, allowing them to develop at their own pace. The simple toys make more demands on the children's imagination than the more formed alternatives and make play much more active, exercising and developing the imagination.

The Activities of the Day

The morning starts with free play within which a number of activities are set up – baking, craft. Handicraft activity is often arranged so that parents can make small things for the story session or nature table and get ideas for their own displays at home. The layout of the toys and the activities make the Rainbow Toddler Group an enjoyable and playful experience, allowing parents to play and to get involved.

After the toys from free play have been tidied away it is time to wash hands ready for snack time. We try to keep the snack as wholesome as possible, offering fruit, oat cakes, rice cakes, bread and fruit teas and drinks for parents.

After the snack it is time for story time. Parents and children sit in a circle together around the story table set out with dolls and natural scenery which reflect the season. The story is told using the figures, songs and rhymes, and the children love to have the same one retold for three or four weeks. The stories often reflect the seasons and yearly celebrations such as Christmas, Easter and Mid-Summer, linking children strongly with the natural world around them and the cycle of the year. After the story the seasonal songs and rhymes of "ring time" follow. Like the story, these are repeated so that they become well loved and familiar. Following ring time, weather permitting, the children then go out in the garden for a walk. Parents are asked to bring wellies and coats if the weather is likely to be cold or wet. We end the morning with some circle rhymes and the Goodbye Song – until next time.

As young children learn through imitation, parents are asked to join in the routines of the morning and to help hold and create a calm and peaceful space where children are free to be as lively or as still as they wish. A toddler group leader will lead the sessions. Parents' involvement is needed and welcomed. This may be for helping set up or tidy away at the end of the morning or with taking a turn at preparing the snacks. Steiner playgroups have a particular quality that is enjoyed by parents and children alike.

For further enquiries call the Toddler Leader via Lancaster Steiner School on 01524 841351

CHERRY TREES KINDERGARTEN

For children aged 3 to 6. The Kindergarten teacher is Denise Randall and her assistants are Julie Harris, Jasmin Brackenfield and Barbera Kanzler.

Lancaster Steiner School Cherrytrees Kindergarten meets the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Where our own practice is in conflict with Early Years goals in the EYFS we have applied for and received exemptions and modifications. Details are available on the Kindergarten noticeboard and from the Office.

Lancaster Steiner School Cherrytrees Kindergarten receives Nursery Education Vouchers. These are available to children in the 3 to 5 years age range. Please see the Office for details.

The kindergarten age is one of the most important phases in a person's life. In a young child's smile and laughter you can see the joy and challenge of learning to play, of first finding friends and of discovering the shape of the world. So much is achieved during this important bridge between home and school. As children of this age are so sensitive to their environment, both physical and emotional, it is important that they are given the chance to develop in harmonious, beautiful surroundings that are worthy of imitation. This is one of the first criteria of our kindergarten, and is reflected in the atmosphere of the kindergarten room, the quality of our toys and materials and most importantly in the example the teachers give.

Perhaps the truest reflection of successful kindergarten work comes in the quality and imagination of the children's play. Shells or conkers that a child picks up may be tea and biscuits for friends one moment, the tickets for a ride in a bus of lined up chairs the next, or gifts given to a princess: they are a bridge to different lands. Imitation of adults and friends gradually transforms into a fantasy and play that becomes one of the most distinctive aspects in the emergence of each child's individuality.

The fluid active imagination expressed here is a delicate gift. It deserves time and caring space for its development and is easily hampered through over stimulation, or too early fixation in the abstract alphabet of formal learning. Once won, though, the nurtured imagination forms a real foundation for intellectual development and the creative, flexible thinking skills needed in adult life.

We believe that what the child experiences through a deep watching and listening, and then trying things out, is better than any formal learning in the years before school begins.

The Kindergarten Day

After arrival the day begins with a practical or artistic activity. There is profound satisfaction in the luminous colours that come from painting on wet paper, or in making bread which is later eaten in the snack time.

When this is cleared away plenty of time is given for the development of imaginative play, not forgetting the importance of tidying up afterwards. Now it is "ring time": songs, finger plays and simple movements are used in rhythmic activities that the children do together.

For their snack the children sit around the table and talk quietly amongst themselves, or their teacher can introduce a topic to direct their thoughts in a fruitful way. Later the children put on their outside clothes and go to the garden where no matter what the weather they can play in the open or quietly watch the passing miracles of nature.

Then comes the story telling, when the children listen to and fill with their own imagination the contours of the tale, sometimes the same one for some weeks. At first the story is an adventure, then a new friend, then a companion; so the story becomes a gift for the child's growing Soul.

Daily, Weekly and Seasonal Rhythms of the Kindergarten

In the kindergarten the daily activities are interwoven with weekly and seasonal rhythms. The daily activity follows a weekly cycle: thus Monday is painting day and Wednesday is baking day. The games in “ring time” have a seasonal flavour and the story is often connected to the time of the year. There is a nature table in the kindergarten room hosting natural objects of the season. At the various festivals of the year parents are able to join with their children in simple seasonal celebrations.

Participation in this weaving of rhythms gives the children a strong sense of security in the world and self.

Hours

Kindergarten starts at 8.55am and finishes at 12.45pm and children can arrive any time after 8.45am. Please could all parents/guardians ensure that they are on time dropping off and collecting their child.

Clothing requirements

Indoor play – all children need a pair of slippers. Children need slippers that allow them to move easily, safely and have some grip. Pumps are inexpensive and easy to resource and knitted ones are usually available to buy at School fairs or via the contact on the noticeboard.

Outdoor – children will go out in wet and muddy conditions and so will need the following:

a hat for winter and summer

wellingtons

a warm waterproof coat

waterproof trousers

a t-shirt with sleeves in summer (short sleeves are OK but not sleeveless)

A change of clothes – all children need to have a complete change of clothes kept in a bag in Kindergarten. Please ensure these are replaced if used during the day.

Please could all footwear have names in them.

Clothes to wear to school

It is good to have layers that can be adjusted according to the temperature. Please send children to school with sleeves (besides their jumper and coat) and with something warm on their legs for the garden during the winter months.

To support children’s play, we also ask that clothing is not decorated with pictures of cartoon or film characters

Helping

There are lots of small engaging jobs that we need your help with – washing/ironing costumes or play clothes, mending broken things, collecting items for our festivals, finding new fir cones etc. You can check on the Kindergarten noticeboard or ask the Kindergarten teacher. Thank you.

Parents evenings

There are two types of parents evenings:

1. Individual meetings – where you meet with the teacher to discuss your own child.

2. Class parents evenings – where we all meet together. The teacher will talk about some of the ideas behind kindergarten work – creative discipline, working through inflation,, rhythm and routine and so on, and there will usually be a simple craft activity.

We expect parents and guardians to make it a priority to attend both meetings as these are regarded to be an integral part of Steiner education. If you are unable to attend parents evening please let the teacher know.

There is much thought behind all of the information given here. Full explanation is beyond the remit of this handbook, but if you wish to ask, discuss or to understand anything further please ask the Kindergarten teacher.

STARTING KINDERGARTEN

We hope this information will help you and your child settle into kindergarten. The information is fairly brief so if you would like to know more about something or you are interested in the ideas behind particular guidelines, please feel free to ask.

Settling in

Children start kindergarten at different ages and with different experiences of being away from their parents and carers. Each child is also different – some children adjust quickly to being in a group without their parent or carer, whilst other children need longer to feel confident. This step away from the home environment into a larger group is a significant change for most children so we take it quite slowly at first.

With a younger child it is helpful if the parent/carer stays with them at kindergarten for the whole of the first one or two mornings. The child gets to see that the routines and order of the morning stay the same and this does a lot to reassure them and help them to feel safe and confident away from you.

After this it is often helpful to leave the child for some of the morning and come back into kindergarten for outdoor time and the story. This could be done for one or more sessions until your child has settled well. We can be flexible and take our lead from what each child needs.

How can parents help?.

It is good to have a similar routine when you arrive each morning. You can start this by helping your child to put their coat on their peg each morning, their shoes or wellies on the racks and slippers on before they come into kindergarten.

In the kindergarten adults have a very 'low key' approach. The teacher and assistants will be busy with an activity that the children can choose to join or not. This is usually at the table. We ask parents to help with this or another simple job. In this way your child has the security of knowing that you are there and that they can come back to you. They can also take the first steps on their own into play with other children.

During the kindergarten morning we keep conversation between adults to a minimum. This helps the children to engage in their own play and conversations with each other. We ask you to also help us with this.

What to bring

You will need

- Slippers that fit firmly on feet and have a good grip – pumps are fine
- A bag with a change of clothes that you can leave on the child's peg
- Wellies – if you have a spare pair you can leave them at kindergarten
- A waterproof coat. Waterproof leggings are also useful.
- A hat both for winter and summer

Daily rhythms

8.45 – 10.40 daily activity, free play and seasonal activities

10.40 – 11.20 raisin time, tidy up time and ring time

11.20 – 11.45 snack time

11.45 – 12.30 garden time

12.30 – 12.45 washing hands and story time

Apart from our outdoor day and on special occasions we keep to this order but we are flexible about the timing of different things.

Weekly activities

Monday – painting

Tuesday – making apple crumble

Wednesday – making bread rolls

Thursday – outdoor day

Friday – making soup – each child brings a vegetable for this

Snacks for the week

Monday – rice cakes and oatcakes

Tuesday – apple crumble

Wednesday – bread

Thursday – bread

Friday – soup, oatcakes and rice cakes

All food we provide is vegetarian and we use a dairy-free margarine. Special dietary needs are arranged with parents during the initial interview.

Keeping in touch.

If you need a long chat please let me know and we can arrange a time to meet or speak on the phone. There is also time at the beginning and end of each morning for a few words. It is important for us to know things such as when a child is tired or upset. Then we know what they are likely to need and we can look after them better.

Clothes, toys and jewellery

Clothes – The children are very active at kindergarten so they need clothes that they can easily move in and are safe for climbing. They generally get fairly muddy in the garden so older rather than ‘best’ clothes are better. Layers that can be removed or added to adjust temperature are best. To help protect from the sun we insist that children have their upper arms covered.

We also ask you to send your child to kindergarten in clothes that are not decorated with cartoon or TV characters or carrying slogans etc.

Toys – when children first start kindergarten they may need to bring a favourite teddy or doll to help make the transition. Apart from this we ask you to leave toys at home.

Jewellery – we also ask you to leave jewellery at home.

Television and computers

Children’s play and the importance of play is a large subject in itself. Here we need to say that from experience we have found that deep imaginative play flourishes best in certain conditions. To get the best from kindergarten and to support deep play we ask that you do not let your child watch television or play on the computer in the mornings before they come to kindergarten.

Parents and Teacher

The children are at the heart of kindergarten. It is a space for them to be themselves and to flourish. I am there to talk with parents, to listen and to make adjustments so that each child has what they need. Please feel free to talk to me about any concerns or needs that you have.

LOWER SCHOOL

Children enter Class 1 age 6

For the 2009/2010 school year we will have Class 1, Class 2/3/4 and Class 5

Our intention is that the school will continue to offer education up to class 8 (age 14) and the situation will be reviewed over the coming year as part of the forward planning for the continuing growth of the School.

Teachers

Class 1 – Su Eastham

Class 2/3/4 – Rowan Brook-Thompson

Class 5 – Louise Duirwyn

Both classes also have specialist subject teachers that come in weekly and these are:

Form drawing with all classes, woodwork with Class 5 – Mark Bamford (known by most people as Bambi)

Allotment gardening with Classes 2– 5 – John Rogers

German with all classes – Nicky Snell

Teachers are assisted by volunteers (e.g. on walk afternoons or for handwork) – These volunteers are either parents or people from outside the school community who would like to support the school. All volunteers are CRB checked before coming into classes.

Details of the terms curriculum, subject teachers and assistants can be seen on the noticeboard by the front door.

Details of teachers qualifications can be viewed in the office – please ask.

Formal schooling commences at a gradual pace now the children are ready and keen to learn. Here they meet their teacher who will instruct, support, guide, and facilitate them over the next eight years of their school life.

Every morning the children take part in a 2-hour lesson delivered by the class teacher known as the Main Lesson. In each lesson 'block', one subject is studied continuously for a period of three to five weeks. This allows the children to become immersed in the subject long enough before moving on to another block and subjects are revisited later in the syllabus to build on what has been previously learned.

Core curriculum subjects taught in the Main Lessons include reading, writing, numeracy, mathematics, geography, history, the sciences, farming and the natural world, and legends, stories and mythology. Other shorter subject lessons are taught later in the day, sometimes by specialist teachers, including music, handwork, foreign languages (German and Spanish), painting, modelling, games, gardening, nature walks, and woodwork.

Each day the timetable aims to provide a balance between academic, artistic and practical activities. The Main Lesson begins each morning with singing, poetry and rhythmic movement. Daily, mental arithmetic and multiplication tables are chanted and clapped and danced. Grammar is learnt; children form their letters and numbers artistically. Oral skills, as well as literacy and numeracy, form an integral part of their learning; each morning children recall stories and the content from the previous day's lesson, exercising their listening and conversation skills and memory.

Artistic and practical activities include traditional crafts, knitting, painting, drawing, music and practical work with various materials are integrated into the syllabus. Research demonstrates that the encouragement of manual dexterity through practical work is essential for cognitive development within the child. Such activities are fundamental in fostering the determination and application required to transform an idea into an accomplishment, in this case a useful artefact or work of art. Also in the course of doing, meaningful teaching and learning opportunities present themselves in which the teacher may relate the children's learning from other lessons.

Academic success is important in the laying of the foundations for a healthy and fulfilling life; equally important is the task of cultivating in pupils a broad and coherent understanding of themselves and the wider context of the world we live in and their relationship to it. For this reason, integrated into the syllabus is an awareness and respect for nature, the environment and the seasons. Myths, legends and stories are told from many ethnic and cultural backgrounds; these provide a multicultural element in the curriculum as a basis for understanding our common humanity and universal human values. By these means, a sense of connection, security and stability unfolds which helps to prepare the children to take their place in the world, to work enthusiastically, to involve themselves responsibly and to act with consideration for others.

In this philosophy, education is conceived of as an art. It is the task of the teacher to bring this education to the pupils in such a living and pictorial way that fires their imagination and enthusiasm to imbue a genuine love of learning in each child and a joy of giving their best.

Currently at 11 years old pupils transfer into local secondary schools to begin their GCSE courses. Our aim is to enable pupils to stay until 13/14 before moving on. Educated through the comprehensive Steiner curriculum, pupils will have the necessary key skills in place, literacy – numeracy, social and emotional competence, to integrate into the state system.

At Lancaster Steiner School we trust the education we provide will lay sound foundations in the children, helping them under the pressures of an ever-changing and demanding society to develop the positive qualities needed to realise themselves and meet all the challenges that life brings.

THE STEINER CURRICULUM

The Main Lessons

The Main lesson occurs every morning between 9 am and 11 am and is the session in which the child works their way through the subject blocks of their year group. The Main Lesson blocks cover a period of 3 to 5 weeks, allowing for an interdisciplinary and more project-based approach.

The Steiner Waldorf curriculum is based on Rudolf Steiner's views of child development, therefore the subjects as the pupils study these are laid out so as to fit into this pattern of development.

In small Steiner schools, like Lancaster, it is common to have joint and multiple year group classes, thus making it necessary to combine year group subjects within the Lower School curriculum over the school year.

Often in joint classes the Year Plan will be designed to cover the subjects of the lower year up to Christmas moving gradually into the higher year by the end of the year. However with multiple year group classes a more flexible approach is needed which ensures that, while each year group receives the essential subject blocks for their year group, within the Main Lesson Blocks of Maths and English a more ability based approach is needed. For example, the way in which a child is asked to approach an English task, will be dependant both on the year they are in and their own development. Such differentiation means that often teaching assistants are brought in both to help the class teacher of the mixed year class in Main Lessons and to teach single year groups their individual subject Block Lessons.

The Subject Lesson

Subject lessons include Music, German, Environmental Study, Form drawing, Handwork, Crafts, Gardening, Painting and Drawing. These occur after the morning break and in the afternoons. These are often taught by teaching specialists who work throughout the Steiner curriculum with close interaction with the Class Teacher, so that the Main Lesson subjects can be brought into the subject lessons too. Therefore if the children are doing a Geography Block, then the language teacher will also look at geography, such as giving and asking for directions, describing the home or area you live in. Painting and Drawing lessons will often be very closely connected to the Main Lessons.

The following gives you an example of the subjects covered in each year within the Steiner Curriculum:

Class 1

English – First letters and writing; fairy stories

Maths – Exploring numbers: the four processes of adding, giving away, sharing and multiplying

Nature Studies – Drawing, Seasons

Class 2

English – Building on writing (lower case letters) and reading: folk tales and fables

Maths – Developing the use of the four processes; time tables, 100's, 10's and units

Nature Studies – The Elements

Class 3

English – Old Testament Stories

Maths –Weights and measures; practising the four processes, concrete maths

Environmental Studies – farming and the archetypal professions (including field study trip to Botton Village School)

Class 4

English – Norse Mythology; early grammar

Maths – Fractions, long multiplication and long division

Environmental Studies – Local geography, man and animal

Class 5

English – Ancient Indian Mythology; continued grammar

Maths – Geometry, statistics and charts

Environmental Studies – Geography of the British Isles; Botany

History – Classical Greece (culminating in taking part in the Steiner Schools Olympics)

Class 6

English – Extended grammar: sentence structure

Maths – Business maths, Construction Geometry

Environmental Studies – European geography, minerals

History – The Romans

Class 7

English – Moods and essay writing

Maths – Algebra, negative numbers

Environmental Studies – World Cultural geography

History – Post Roman, Middle Ages

Class 8

English – Moods in poetry and major play

Maths – Equations, geometry of solids

Environmental Studies – Human geography

History – Modern European history

SCHOOL HOURS

	Kindergarten	Classes 1 and 2	Classes 3, 4 and 5
Monday	8.55 am – 12.45pm	8.55am – 12.45pm *	8.55am – 3.15pm
Tuesday	8.55 am – 12.45pm	8.55am – 3.15pm	8.55am – 3.15pm
Wednesday	8.55 am – 12.45pm	8.55am – 3.15pm	8.55am – 3.15pm
Thursday	8.55 am – 12.45pm	8.55am – 3.15pm	8.55am – 3.15pm
Friday	8.55 am – 12.45pm	8.55am – 12.45pm	8.55am – 12.45pm

LOWER SCHOOL DAILY TIMETABLE

8.55	registration
9.00 – 11.00	circle time and main lesson
11.00 – 11.30	break
11.30 – 12.45	sessional lessons/handwork/practice
1.00 – 1.45	lunch (except Fridays)
1.45 – 3.15	painting/allotment/craft/walk

AFTERNOON CLUB

The School runs an afternoon club for children aged 3 onwards from 12.45 to 3.15 every weekday during term time. Children will be collected from Kindergarten by Afternoon Care Club staff.

Afternoon Club provides your child with the opportunity to eat their lunch, rest and/or play with their friends in a warm and friendly environment. Some of our activities include drawing, puzzles, sewing and craft and playing with the large collection of Brio, construction and farm sets. We have a great home corner, lovely story books and also access to our garden for outdoor play which we try and do most days.

Staff

The Club is run on behalf of the school by Joanne Bretherton with assistance as required by Barbera Kanzler.

Lunch

You will need to provide a healthy packed lunch for your child/ren. Please label your child's lunch box. Water will be provided to drink.

Clothing

Children should have clothing available as for Kindergarten – ie wellies, coat, hat, which may be hung in the Kindergarten cloakroom. Please ensure there are named spare clothes available in your child's bag on their peg.

Bookings

Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis and should ideally be booked for the half term in advance to guarantee a place. Booking forms are sent out by Joanne and are to be returned to her with payment. She can then confirm your place and issue a receipt.

Currently we can offer 8 places daily, but can provide up to 16 children if they are booked in advance, allowing us to arrange extra staff.

If you would like to book your child in for an extra days places can be booked either directly with Joanne or via the Office.

For individual sessions (not pre-booked in advance) you need to check with the Office in the morning to check availability and book a place for that day's session.

No refunds are payable for pre-booked or ad hoc sessions not attended.

Fees

All sessions, regular and ad hoc **must** be paid for in advance.

We require payment one half term in advance for all pre-booked sessions. Cheques should be made payable to 'Lancaster Steiner School'

Money for ad hoc or daily sessions must be paid at the Office when booking (or when your child is picked up at the end of the day if absolutely necessary)

Please note that children cannot be booked in for further sessions until outstanding fees have been paid.

Half termly bookings are £5.00 per session (£3.69 for each additional child in same family). All other bookings are £5.50 per session.

Absence

Please contact the Office in the morning, before 9 am if your child will not be attending Afternoon Club.

Collecting your child

Children **must** be collected at 3.15pm from the Afternoon Club Care room.

If your child is to be collected by somebody other than the parent and known carers, details should be left when booking or a message sent via Office if last minute change.

Should you have any difficulty with collection due to an emergency please contact the Office or Joanne directly on the Afternoon Club mobile phone.

Mobile number

There is a dedicated mobile for emergency use during Club hours only –the number is 079 297 405 61

Policies

Full copies of the Afternoon Club Care Policies are available in the Office.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) POLICY

The School has an SEN policy which is outlined below and which is available to view in the Office.

As part of this Policy, designated SENCOs (SEN Co-ordinators) have been appointed:

Denise Randall has responsibility for Kindergarten and Early Years

Su Eastham has responsibility for Lower School

Both work with the Trustee with responsibility for SEN.

Teachers and SENCO work closely with parents/guardians at every stage and any parent that considers their child may have SEN is always welcome to talk to the Class teacher or to Su or Denise where they will be heard with understanding and their concerns taken seriously.

Lancaster Steiner School considers all children as having individual needs and aims to meet these needs as best as possible taking into consideration the child's age, developmental stage and other circumstances.

The admissions policy ensures children with SEN will not be accepted when

1. The School is unsuitable for a child's age, ability or special educational needs
2. The child's attendance would be incompatible with the efficient education of the children already placed in the school
3. We do not have all the resources to meet their needs

The role of the SENCO

Supported by other learning support staff and relevant teachers, the SENCO will be responsible for:

1. The day to day operation of the SEN Policy
2. Liaising with, and advising, all members of staff
3. Co-ordination of provision for children with SEN
4. Maintaining a SEN register and overseeing records on children with SEN
5. Liaising with parents/guardians of children with SEN or ensuring class teachers do so
6. Contributing to training and keeping all members of staff informed of new developments and issues
7. Liaising with internal specialists
8. Liaising with external agencies

Definition of SEN

A pupil has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty, which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

A pupil has a learning difficulty if they:

- a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of pupils of the same age/class: or
- b) have a disability which prevents or hinders the pupil from making use of educational facilities provided for pupils in that age group in the school.

In line with the DfES SEN Code of Practice the School uses a 'graduated response' to pupils with SEN:

- a) School Action Step 1 and b) School Action Step 2.

School Action

The triggers for School Action could be:

- A teacher's concern about a pupil's behaviour or learning abilities
- Parent/guardian(s) concern about a pupil's behaviour or learning abilities
- The results of Class Study or Child Study

a) School Action Step 1

As a consequence of these triggers a pupil may be recommended to be referred to:

- School based assessment
- Doctor or relevant therapist

The SENCO will organise that records are kept based upon observation by all involved with the referred pupil, and that parents/guardians are kept informed.

b) School Action Step 2

The SENCO will organise the most effective intervention, In some cases there would have been an immediate move to School Action Step 2. In most cases the intervention would take the form of:

A consistent approach by all staff involved – usually with significant input by the SENCO in drawing up of individual plans of work and in the timing of reviews;

It may be recommended that a child's parents/guardians seek independent advice from an anthroposophical doctor or homeopath

Internal assessment for Specific Learning Difficulties led by the SENCO, who might seek further advice e.g. from a specialist

Learning Support Lessons (usually following the assessment mentioned above)

Other support e.g. an additional teacher in lessons

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE

Lancaster Steiner School is open to all children irrespective of race, religion, gender, social class or disability. Decisions about admission are made on the basis of the school's ability to meet the needs of each child.

Visiting to Find Out More

You are invited to visit the School and Kindergarten and to meet and talk with teachers. Arrangements are made through the school office.

Application

Children are admitted to Kindergarten the term after their third birthday and may stay until class 1 entrance at age 6. The lower school aims to continue until class 8 (ages 13/14) when the children may transfer to local secondary schools to begin GCSE courses. This expansion into Upper School is being discussed this year at school development days. Children are welcome to join us at any stage up to the age of 11. When you decide you would like your child to attend Lancaster Steiner School and Kindergarten we start a formal admissions procedure. The interview, which is part of the admissions procedure, is a very important stage. We need to know that we can meet the needs of your child. It is also likely to be the beginning of a close relationship between you and your child's teacher that will help build a very solid base from which your child will grow and learn.

Admission Procedure

1. You return the application form and a non-returnable fee of £20.
2. The administrator arranges an interview time at the school. Children below five years meet with just the kindergarten teacher. For entry into Year One and above you and your child meet with two teachers. One of these will be the prospective teacher for your child. The interview usually lasts for approximately an hour.
3. We ask you to also bring with you any information that it is important for us to know about your child. Please include:
 - a. relevant medical information e.g. about hearing loss
 - b. information about any special needs
 - c. if your child has been attending another school – the last two school reports and examples of the child's school work.
1. After the interview your application is discussed at the weekly teachers' meeting, which takes place on Wednesday afternoon.
2. The administrator will contact you to let you know if a place is available and arrange a financial interview. This may involve a meeting but is often by telephone and post. PLEASE NOTE: IT CAN TAKE 3/4 WEEKS TO COMPLETE THE APPLICATION PROCESS.
3. The school asks all new parents to pay a deposit to be held on account equivalent to one half terms fees.
4. The administrator will then contact you and arrange a starting date for your child. You will be asked to go into the school office to fill out registration forms. We will also give you an registration pack and can help with any questions you have.
5. Children are then accepted on a terms trial basis, which may be extended in particular cases. If within this time there is any need to reconsider a child's place within the school or to extend the child's trial period, the child's parents or guardians will be contacted.

LANCASTER STEINER SCHOOL FEES POLICY 2009/10

Children may only attend Kindergarten and School with a current financial agreement. Assisted places and bursary places may only be offered from the date on which the school receives the application.

Lancaster Steiner School Cherrytrees Kindergarten receives Nursery Education Vouchers. These are available to children in the 3 to 5 years age range. Please see the Office for further details.

Kindergarten per child fees with Nursery Vouchers

(All children are eligible up until the end of the term in which they turn five).

£1,396.12 per year (**£760.00** of which is parental contribution) for 2 days per week.
£2,094.18 per year (**£1,140.00** of which is parental contribution) for 3 days per week.
£2,792.24 per year (**£1,520.00** of which is parental contribution) for 4 days per week.
£3,490.30 per year (**£1,900.00** of which is parental contribution) for 5 days per week.

Parents whose children are eligible for the voucher scheme pay **£10.00** per session.

No sibling discount is available with these rates.

Kindergarten per child fees

£2,850 per year for a child in kindergarten 5 days per week after the term in which they turn five. Attendance of less than five days is possible in exceptional circumstances after agreement with the teacher and completion of a home-school agreement.

This is **£15** per session.

Sibling discount for children over five.

Oldest child pays the full fee; first siblings receives a 33% discount and subsequent siblings receive a 66% discount.

Assisted places.

There is an assisted places scheme for Kindergarten. Please contact the office for further information.

Lower School Fees

Per-child fees are **£3,798** for years 1 to 5,

First child pays the full fee.

There is a sibling discount of 33% for the first sibling, and 66% for each subsequent sibling.

- If a family cannot afford the full per-child fees, they may apply for an assisted place. Assisted places are 15% of net income, with a minimum of **£1,898** per child per year. The oldest child pays the full fee; first siblings receive a 33% discount and subsequent siblings receive a 66% discount.

Classroom Materials Charge

When children start Lower School they are provided with a new recorder, Stockmar Block and Stick crayons and Lyra pencils. We also use the very best in specialist Steiner water-colour paints and paper every week and particular main lesson books.

The classroom materials charge of £90 per lower school child per year is payable in full in addition to the lower school fee and is added to your monthly standing order.

Financial Agreements

Financial agreements are reviewed annually and agreements must be signed before the end of each academic year. Fees are paid in advance by monthly standing order. Notice of half a term is required for withdrawal of a child or payment of one half term's fee in lieu of notice.

Contributions arrears procedure.

When a payment is missed a free reminder is sent. If no payment, or explanation of delay is received within 14 days an invoice and letter will be issued and a fine of £15 incurred. If arrears remain unsettled 14 days after receipt of invoice the parents are called for interview.

If parents fail to attend for interview, no agreement is reached or an agreement is reached and not kept to, the class teacher will be informed and invited to a meeting with members of the council to consider the future of the child at the school. Children below statutory school age will be suspended from kindergarten without interview if parents default on fees and fail to respond appropriately to correspondence from the school.

If fees remain outstanding at the end of the academic year, children will not be re-enrolled in September until the arrears are cleared. Financial agreements must be signed and returned to school by the last day of term to allow attendance on the first day of the following term.

If, despite appropriate reminders, agreements are not returned then a place will be held open for a period of **one month** only. Attendance can **only begin the day after** the agreement is received in person by the school Administrator.

Procedure when a child leaves the school

The parent/guardian agrees to give 8 weeks notice in writing to the administrator and class teacher; to pay the agreed contribution to the end of the notice period; that if the child leaves without the notice period being served, the parent/guardian will continue to pay the agreed contribution for the notice period.

Other Terms and Conditions.

- Fees are paid strictly in advance.
- Fee agreements are not altered retrospectively. If problems arise parents must communicate immediately and if a reassessment of the agreement is requested fees accrue at the previously agreed rate until an alternative agreement is reached.
- If a child is excluded from the school/kindergarten at the request of the teacher, fees cease to be payable immediately
- If a pre-school child is withdrawn temporarily during the settling in period (3 months) by mutual agreement between kindergarten teacher and parent and the kindergarten is fully subscribed a 50% retainer fee is required
- As above but when kindergarten is not full, fees are waived for the 'rest' period. A half terms notice still required if the child is eventually withdrawn.
- In both above cases the kindergarten place is held open for 3 months.
- Any changes to standing order payments must be advised to the school office in advance.
- When there are two households involved in the care of a child or children the fees will either be calculated based on each parent's income or the full fee may be divided between the two parents.
- Concessions for siblings apply only when one household already pays for the first child i.e. in the case of parents living apart with more than one child, each parent pays the school fee (according to the current fees policy) for one child each and a concession of 66% discount will only then apply for the third child.
- Cash or cheque payments only accepted in exceptional circumstances.

COMMUNICATION

Office

The Office is run by The Administrator Alice Granger and Secretary Rebecca Wheten. These are both part time posts but between them the office is usually open throughout the school day.

If in doubt about who you need to talk to or would like some information about any aspect of the school please call in to the Office.

Please would parents come in well before school ends if they need to discuss anything with Alice or Rebecca in order that discussions can take place before the children come out of class and so that the office can close on time at 3.15. You may also like to ring beforehand to make an appointment.

Notice boards

There are 3 notice boards in the corridors – the front one near the front door displays legal certificates and Council minutes, the main one near the back door displays school and general Steiner news and articles as well as details of local and other events, courses and suppliers. The small board by the staff room is for the School Shop.

Outside the Office door is a blackboard where messages can be left if office closed and next to this is the workday and fundraising event calendar where you can sign up for your volunteering days.

Bulletin

The Bulletin is produced at the end of each term and provides a summary of what has gone on in and out of school as well as articles and examples of children's work. It is sent out to all parents and Friends of Lancaster Steiner School as well as posted on the school web site.

Pigeon holes

These are located outside the office and messages can be left for Council, members of staff and all the groups. Correspondence of a more confidential nature e.g. financial info., can be left in the Office in-tray in an envelope marked with who it is for and Office staff will deal with it.

School website

The website is currently in the process of being updated and expanded .It includes information such as term dates, bulletins, events diary and policies.

Parent file

A file containing copies of all policies, forms, parent handbook, prospectus, bulletins and other useful information is kept on the shelf by the 'late' book and is updated regularly.

Class parents evenings

These are held each term and give parents/guardians a chance to experience what your child is doing in class, browse through your children's work and discuss personal and common concerns with the teacher and other parents. Parents are expected to attend and should speak with the teacher if unable to do so. Parents evenings for Kindergarten are also held regularly.

Absence

Please inform the teacher in advance if you intend to keep your child absent from class for any reason. If your child is off sick, please leave a message with the Office first thing in the morning. If a child is still missing from class by 9.30am, Office staff will contact parents/guardians to check the situation.

CONCERNS AND PROBLEMS

Communication is the key here; whatever it is, please talk about it with the appropriate person before it becomes a major issue.

Teachers are open to discuss any problems regarding the teaching and children. For problems relating to your individual child in the classroom you should discuss this with the class teacher.

It should be noted however that before or during school is not the appropriate time to discuss problems with the teachers as they will have their thoughts on the day's lessons with the children and need to concentrate on preparation for the start of the day.

Afternoon or evening calls will find the teachers more receptive and individual teachers will let parents know when they are available. It is also often possible to have a word with teachers after school – preferably by prior arrangement.

Please contact the Office for telephone numbers if needed.

For general class situations talk to the teacher or the class representative. If you need to take it further they will advise you about taking it to College of Teachers meeting.

The Administrator is happy to answer any concerns and questions about management and maintenance issues including school policies, health and safety and volunteering.

Any issues relating to fees will be dealt with by the Treasurer and he can be contacted via the School Office.

Please call into the school Office if unsure who is the best person to talk to and they can advise.

If the matter is not solved at these levels it can be brought to the Council of Trustees,

The school has a **Complaints Policy**, a summary of which is outlined on the following page.

COMPLAINTS POLICY -SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

We try to deal with all concerns quickly and effectively. If you are not satisfied with the way the concern has been dealt with, the four stages summarised below tell you what steps you can take.

Stage 1 Initial contact with the school

- To discuss your complaint informally please contact the class teacher or the administrator within school hours.
- If your complaint can't be resolved in this way then the next step is to make a formal complaint

Stage 2 Formal consideration of your complaint

- You should put your complaint in writing to the College of Teachers and you will receive a written acknowledgement. A complaints form can be obtained from the office
- You may be invited to the teachers' meeting to discuss your complaint. If you wish you may bring someone with you to this meeting
- The Chair of College, another teacher or the administrator will carry out a full investigation
- The Chair of College or other nominated member of staff will keep records of all meetings and phone conversations plus other related documents
- Once all the relevant facts are established you will be sent a written response to the complaint. This will contain a full explanation for the decision taken and the reason for it. If follow-up action is needed, the school will tell you what it is proposing to do
- If your complaint has gone through these two stages and you are still not happy with the outcome, the next stage is to make a formal complaint to the School Council

Stage 3 Consideration by the School Council

- You will need to contact the Chair of Council by letter, enclosing a copy of your written complaint, indicating which matters remain unresolved. New complaints should not be included. Letters should be sent to the school office
- The Chair of Council can agree to a complaint/review panel if she/he feels it would help. The aim of this panel is to try to resolve the complaint. However, it may sometimes only be possible to establish facts and to make recommendations. This should reassure you that the complaint has been taken seriously
- Should the Chair of Council decide to hold a complaints review meeting you will be informed of the date, time and place of the meeting by letter. The letter will also tell you what will happen at the meeting and explain that you can bring someone with you. Any member of staff directly involved in the complaint will also be invited to attend the meeting
- Generally, no new evidence or witnesses should be introduced at this time by any of the participants
- The meeting will be conducted in an informal manner so that everyone can put their case without interruption
- The secretary of the Council will send you a written statement outlining the decision of the panel within two weeks

Stage 4 Complaints to the Steiner Waldorf School's Fellowship and Ofsted

- The panel's decision will usually be final. However, if you are still dissatisfied you may contact the SWSF or Ofsted

A copy of the full complaints policy and procedure may be viewed in the School Office

ROLE OF THE PARENTS AND GUARDIANS WITHIN THE SCHOOL

Parental/Guardian Participation, Maintenance and Fundraising

Sending your child to Lancaster Steiner School signals real choice and commitment. Your involvement as a parent will be a crucial factor in the success of your child's education.

Mutual understanding and regular contact between parents and teachers are vital, and for this reason, teachers can be contacted to arrange a meeting at any time throughout the year. Parents' evenings and workshops are organised to provide opportunities for parents to meet the teacher and staff, other parents, and to find out more about the education your child receives and the thinking behind it.

All parents are required to help the school in different ways reflecting their skills and abilities ranging from gardening to business skills.

Each year the school calendar includes a number of seasonal festivals and fairs. On these occasions the parents, children, staff and friends of the school community come together and celebrate the highlights of the year. These event days may include the sharing of children's poems, drama and songs, shared meals, stalls and games.

Non financial contributions

It is part of the ethos of Steiner Schools that parents share the responsibility for the school alongside the teachers. To this end, all families are expected to make non-financial contributions to assist with the upkeep and running of Lancaster Steiner School. This means offering time and skills in any number of areas from maintenance to management. Working together like this builds a stronger school community which benefits adults and children alike.

The success of the school depends on this non-financial contributions system. Without these contributions, we estimate that annual fees would need to increase £500-£1000 more per child.

We require every family to contribute a minimum of 1 hour per week over the 52 week year. We acknowledge that many families already contribute far in excess of this figure, and we greatly appreciate all the contributions made towards the school.

We will be calculating non-financial contribution hours contributed on a termly basis (17 hours per term) and each family will be required to fill in a contributions sheet for each term.

It is surprisingly easy to accrue your non-financial contribution hours.

As an example, your 17 hours for a term could be contributed as follows -

3 hours washing curtains and blankets (work that could be done at home),

4 hours preparing the school for a fair,

3 hours serving food at a NESTT weekend,

3 hours pruning hedges in the garden,

4 hours preparing the bulletin (work that could be done at home).

For Kindergarten families non-financial contribution hours are pro rata depending on the number of days that the child attends kindergarten. Each day's attendance per week accrues 3.5 hours per term. E.g. if your child attends 2 mornings a week, your non-financial contribution hours will be 7 hours per term.

If the agreed hours are not completed within that term, payment will be requested at the beginning of the following term, at a rate of £7.50 per hour not contributed to allow the school to employ resources to undertake such work on your behalf.

These termly non-financial contributions are over and above the help at maintenance days which we expect from every family.

At the same time as this year's financial contribution interview, you will be asked to attend a non-financial contributions meeting to discuss how best you may fulfil these obligations for the coming year. To ensure that the needs of the school are balanced with the skills of the contributors we ask that you consider where you might best use your skills and complete the skills/experience form (copies available from the Office or copies are in the Parent file).

Work mornings

A maintenance rota is set up at the start of each school year and all families are required to attend 5 mornings per year, with a charge towards the cost of maintaining the building for those families who do not do so. Kindergarten parents whose children attend part time are asked to attend 2 days per year. This rota helps to ensure that it is not a handful of parents carrying maintenance responsibilities and aims to be as fair as possible. They also help bring the school community together.

Fundraising events

The School runs several fund-raising events throughout the year either based at school or in the local area. These are essential for the finances of the school and all families should be involved in some way with these.

These cover a range of activities so there is something for everyone to use their skills – whether it is cleaning, cooking, washing up, knitting animals, promotion etc.

External events include providing the catering at someone else's event e.g. the Hurdy Gurdy Festival; having a stall selling craft or running a children's craft activity or the School Shop at a local fair or running and promoting a large event e.g. The Complementary Health Fair.

Events which usually take place at school include our Summer and Winter Fairs and NESTT weekends.

Detailed requirements and a work rota for each event will be posted in the corridor a few weeks prior to each event and all parents are asked to contribute something to the day – whether it is their time helping on the day, baking or buying food, cleaning or any number of other tasks.

School Shop

The School has a shop selling a wide selection of books, wooden and natural toys and dolls, art and craft materials, co-operative board games and small gifts.

Check the notice board by the staff room for opening times, events and up to date information on stock.

If you would like to volunteer to help with the shop, either at one of our events or if you would like to take it to an event or group in your area, please ask Rebecca in the Office or leave a note in the School Shop pigeon hole.

Library

The school has a small library which parents can join and then borrow books. It costs £? to join and then £1/book when taken out for a period of 3 weeks. This £1 is refunded when the book is returned unless the borrower is happy for it to be retained as a donation for the purchase of further books.

The library is run by Sarah Deakin – please see her if you would like to join or have any further questions.

SCHOOL FESTIVALS

The celebration of the festivals throughout the year is important to mark the seasonal changes and the rhythms of the earth outwardly and inwardly. This creates a further supportive rhythm in the lives of the children as they move up the school. Each festival has its own distinctive mood and parents are encouraged to join with the teachers and children in rebuilding a tradition of marking the festivals.

Detailed arrangements for each festival will be sent out by letter to all families nearer the individual dates

Michaelmas

Michaelmas is the festival of courage and has been enthusiastically celebrated in the school from the beginning. We give thanks for the harvest and look forward to the year ahead with courage, perseverance and strength.

Martinmas

The traditional way of celebrating Martinmas is with lantern walks accompanied by singing. It is a festival celebrating the divine spark within us as the cloak of Winter darkens around us.

Advent

As the frosty mornings of Winter begin, Advent brings a quiet hope and anticipation of Christmas. By creating a relationship to nature (it is a time of outer darkness and inner light), we move towards the true preparation for Christmas, and away from outer materialism. An Advent Spiral has become a popular tradition and is one of the festive highlight of the year.

Candlemas

This is the celebration of the coming of the Spring, the snowdrops are just coming out of the cold earth. We celebrate the lightening time with candles and Spring songs.

Easter

Easter, as a celebration of renewal, marks the festivities of Spring, an egg hunt and outdoor activities (weather permitting) take place.

May Day

Traditionally celebrated with maypole dancing, this is a beautiful festival. The children spend the week before practising their dances and dress in their finest with garlands of flowers to rejoice at the coming of the Summer.

St. John's Midsummer- 24th June

St John's or the Midsummer Festival, marks the end of the school year and the beginning of the summer. St. John's is a festival of flowers, fire and singing, usually culminating in a family picnic.

Whitsun

All festivals are created by parents and teachers working together, although children often participate in the preparations. Feel free to contact teachers about festivals in which you wish to participate. All ideas to enhance a festival are welcome, but please bring them forward in time.

BASIC SCHOOL DETAILS AND ROUTINE

Office

The office will be open and staffed by either Alice Granger, the Administrator or Rebecca Wheten, the Secretary between 8.45am and 3.15pm every day (apart from Friday when the office closes at 12.45pm). When there is no one in the Office the answer machine will be on and is checked regularly by all staff.

Arriving at school

School and Kindergarten starts at 8.55am and doors will open for lower school children this time. Kindergarten children may come into school from 8.45am. A member of staff will be on duty in the garden from 8.45 and before this time no children must be left

Punctuality

It is important for children of any age to have a punctual beginning to the day. We ask all parents/guardians to make every effort to arrive in time so that their child is ready to start the day at 8.55am.

For school classes the circle time at the start of the day is an essential and important part of the day that prepares everyone for their lessons. If children are late they disturb the rhythm of the session and if repeatedly late, lose continuity of the rhymes and songs. Now Class 1 is near the door it is also disruptive to them if there are many late arrivals (or if parents arrive too early at pick up time). If children are late for Class 5 and circle time has already started then they must wait outside the classroom until the teacher invites them in.

Whilst we appreciate that some parents would like to chat with others after dropping their children off in the morning, school simply does not have the space at present for a parents room (the staff room is for staff use only). We ask that parents are considerate to the need for quiet in the corridors whilst classes are in session.

Please will all parents/guardians ensure that they collect children promptly at 3.15pm – not only does this ensure that children do not worry but also allows Patricia to start cleaning and teachers to start their meetings. It is not reasonable for staff to be expected to look after children after 3.15pm. In the event that parents/guardians are unavoidably held up please contact the office as soon as possible with either details of alternative arrangements for their child to be collected or an estimated time of arrival in order that arrangements can be made. It is not OK for children to be left playing in the garden unsupervised after school even with parental permission.

School entrance

For security both doors are locked at 9.10am. Children arriving late or adults visiting the school after 9.10am must use the main Lune Road entrance – please ring the bell.

Late arrivals will need to sign the late book which is to the left of the front door on the shelf. Please use this book if your child leaves the building during school time e.g. for dentist appointments.

Please make sure that you ask a member of office staff to lock the door behind you when you leave the building. Also please ensure that the front and side gates are kept closed and bolted at all times.

Leaving school

It is assumed that adults will collect all kindergarten. For safety reasons we need to know who will be collecting your child, thus if the regular adult changed please tell your child's teacher or let the school office know. You will need to introduce the class teacher to the adult/s who will be picking your child up on a regular basis.

Absence

If your child is away from school or kindergarten please telephone the office before 9.15am, a message on the answerphone will do, or send a letter to school beforehand asking permission for the child to be given an authorised absence.

Once children reach statutory school age, when they are 5, legal requirements govern attendance. You need to complete a copy of the following form, copies of which are available from the Office.

Request for authorised absence during term time for children of statutory school age. (from 5yrs)

Wherever possible family holidays should be avoided during term time. The school can only approve absence for family holidays if it considers that there are special reasons that warrant the holiday. We are sympathetic to individual circumstances and understand that this is not always possible. Please note that we will take into account the child's general attendance when considering requests for term time holiday leave.

Up to 10 days per academic year may be authorised, although there is **no** parental entitlement to holiday leave of absence. Only in very exceptional circumstances may leave exceed 10 days in any school year. The school can only approve absence for family holidays if it considers that there are special reasons that warrant the holiday. Please note that holiday prices and the fact that parents have booked a holiday before checking with the school are not special reasons.

Before the school is asked to authorise a holiday we would like to encourage you to think about how your child's absence would affect his/her progress, and how their absence will affect the class as a whole. The school should be consulted **prior** to booking.

Names of children

Class

.....
.....

Dates requested

From..... To.....(inclusive)

Number of school days

Please say why this absence is in term time

.....

Signed(parent/guardian) Date

We authorise / do not authorise this request(college of teachers)

Reasons for decision:

Illness and return to school

In accordance with Health and Safety Regs., please ensure that 48 hours has elapsed following an episode of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, before your child returns to school to help stop contagious illnesses spreading.

If children are ill in school and the teacher feels they need to go home then parents/guardians will be contacted and must arrange for someone to collect them promptly.

Contact with teachers

In the Kindergarten, parents see the teacher at both the beginning and end of each morning.

Short messages may be passed on to the teacher at the beginning of the morning. If you need a longer discussion with the teacher please arrange a time to meet up.

Letters can also be sent with children in the morning if there is anything you would like the teacher to know at the start of the day. Office staff will also be able to pass on messages for you if you wish during school day.

Staff room/sick bay

This room is set aside for the use of staff and as a sick room when necessary. We ask that parents respect the privacy of users of this room. Unfortunately due to the size of the building we currently do not have spare facilities where parents can meet.

Parking

In order to be considerate to our immediate neighbours please do not park for any length of time outside the houses on Lune Road or at any time on the pavements in the side street directly opposite. Please also minimise noise when leaving during any evening events held at school. There is a small car park behind the chip shop which has plenty of space.

SCHOOL PRACTICE AND GUIDELINES

General ethos

We expect everyone to treat each other, the teachers, Office staff, visitors to school, the classrooms and the school with respect.

To behave in a way that doesn't put themselves or anyone else in danger.

To show kindness and supportive behaviour to each other in behaviour and language.

No aggressive behaviour/kicking/sticks as weapons/aggressive games.

General rules, (although others may be introduced as necessary)

The authority of the adult on playground duty must be respected at all times.

No retrieving things from outside the garden without permission of the teacher on playground duty.

No child is allowed out of school boundaries except with the explicit permission of the teacher in charge.

No climbing on the boundary railings.

No throwing of hard objects or using sticks as weapons.

Dress code

The school does not have a uniform. The requirements for school dress have an emphasis on serviceable rather than fashionable clothing. Clothing should be clean and neat at the beginning of the day and be appropriate for the season and activity.

We seek the co-operation of parents/guardians and consider the following unsuitable for school:

Clothing displaying slogans, logos or cartoon or fashion characters e.g. Bratz, Barbie

Sports teams tops or football shirts

Clothes that reveal a bare midriff e.g. low slung trousers or skirts and cropped tops.

Tops and dresses with spaghetti straps

Woolly hats, hoods, baseball caps etc. must not be worn in class

Please dress your child warmly in cold weather. Wellies are needed for most of the year. Girls wearing dresses and skirts need tights in the cooler weather so they can enjoy the fresh air without freezing.

Floors may be cold: slippers are needed for indoor use, preferably with grips on the soles.

Please leave a change of clothes in a named cotton/canvas bag at the school as the children experience all sorts of weather. If spare clothes are used please ensure they are replaced for the next day.

Footwear

All footwear and removable clothing should be marked with the child's name. Wellies and black pumps easily get mixed up so name markings make things much easier.

Footwear must be suitable for the activities and weather. In winter each child will need a pair of wellies.

Walking boots are provided for each child for allotment trips and these are to be kept in school on the rack provided by the back door.

Jewellery and makeup

Children are asked not to use nail varnish, makeup or hair dyes.

Stud earrings are acceptable but not hanging ones for safety reasons.

Any facial or body piercing (apart from earrings) are also unsuitable for school.

Smoking

Smoking and alcohol are prohibited in the school building and grounds, whatever the occasion.

Miscellaneous

The following items are also not to be brought in to school:

Pen knives

Wheelies, rollerskates and skateboards

MP3 players and computer games e.t.c.

Mobile phones

We ask parents not to send their children with mobile phones unless by agreement with the teacher. If a phone is considered necessary it must be switched off throughout the school day.

Head lice

All children are asked to have their hair checked regularly. If a child does have head lice could the parents/guardian please let the Office know so that staff can let the parent body know to check their children's hair to try and stop it spreading (please be assured that this will be handled sensitively and without naming the child/children concerned)

Delacet herbal head lice treatment is available to buy at cost from the school shop or may be available on prescription.

Packed lunches and snacks

Please provide plenty of healthy balanced food, for instance a balance of fruit/vegetables, carbohydrates and proteins. The children need sufficient for both break and lunch.

No swapping or sharing of food is allowed.

No chewing or bubblegum, sweets or fizzy drinks should be brought into school.

Toys

Children are asked not to bring toys to school. When children start Kindergarten they sometimes need a familiar toy to help them make the transition. This is of course acceptable.

Bikes, scooters, pushchairs, car seats etc.

Bikes must be left in the cycle racks. At present storage for scooters, pushchairs etc. is not possible within school due to lack of space and so must be left outside behind the side fence next to the shed. If booster seats have to be left, these should be stored neatly underneath your child's peg.

Television, DVD and computer games

The College of teachers have noticed that children's play and conversation are highly influenced by TV, DVD's and computer games. This can also have a negative effect on behaviour.

While teachers would ultimately prefer that all children's viewing is minimised, they recognise that you as a parent or guardian must decide the role that TV and computers play in your family.

We would ask that children particularly do not watch TV, DVD's or play computer games before coming to school in the morning. We notice that concentration and engagement with the class is often improved.

The teachers ask that parents/guardians maintain a consciousness of the affects of TV and computer games on the class as a group working and learning together.

See appendix for further explanation

Sleep

Please ensure that your child has an adequate nights sleep before school.

School corridors

Please can parents ensure that any excess footwear, clothing, food and any other items brought in from home are taken home on a daily basis to ensure that the corridors and pegs don't get overwhelmed with surplus clothing. Please encourage children to get into the habit of putting their footwear away tidily, especially at the end of the day, as this makes keeping the school clean much easier.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINE

If a child is well enough to be in school we can administer medication following the procedure below. We would however wish to encourage parents/guardians of those children attending in the mornings only, to fit the required number of doses per day into their time at home. Please remember we cover a wide variety of tasks and activities with the children every day and adding to this increases our workload and responsibility.

1. Parent/guardian completes a form available from the Office or teacher BEFORE leaving the child or the medication. If this form is not completed there will be no medication given.
2. The medicine is to be handed to the child's teacher along with the completed form. Should a specific measurement of dose be required the appropriate size spoon must be provided by the parent/guardian.
3. The teacher checks the medication against the form and countersigns it before the parent leaves.
4. The medication is kept with the First Aid Kit, where the children do not have access.
5. On administering the medication the teacher will sign that the dose has been given and enter the date and the time.
6. The medication is returned to the parent/guardian at the end of the day
7. The parent/guardian countersigns the form and it is kept in the medication file in the classroom or kindergarten
8. This procedure is only valid for one day and should there be a need for medication the following day/occasion, the procedure must be followed afresh
9. Where the child may need medication as part of a long term or unpredictable medical condition e.g. asthma inhaler, the parent gives permission on the form for the teacher to provide the medication when the child needs it. Use will be recorded on a daily basis and the parent asked to sign, as detailed above.

PLEASE NOTE

This applies to all forms of medicine and includes homeopathy, herbal, Chinese, Bach and other flower essences, essential oils etc.

All such medication must be kept with the First Aid Kit where the children do not have access.

This is for the safety of all children and to comply with the wishes of parents

FIRST AID

The school is currently in the process of drafting a First Aid Policy, in line with DfES First Aid in Schools Good Practice Guidelines 1999 to which we currently work.

The main first aid box is kept in the Office with smaller kits available for use on trips and at the allotment. Kindergarten also has a first aid kit.

The nominated first aiders are:

Rowan Brook-Thompson
Joanne Bretherton

The Appointed Person in the event of an accident or injury is:

Alice Granger

HOMEOPATHY

The school uses a small range of homeopathic remedies and creams as part of its first aid kit. These are only used if parents/guardians have signed their permission as part of the registration forms. If you have any questions regarding use of homeopathy within school, please speak with the Secretary, Rebecca Wheten who is a qualified homeopath.

The following are the basic remedies used and their most common usage:

Creams

HyperCal – cuts, grazes and bites

Arnica – bruising

Urtical – for mild sunburn and itchy rashes and bites e.g. nettle rash

Remedies

Arnica – bumps, falls, bruising

Chamomilla – teething

Hypericum – with Arnica for injuries to fingers and toes e.g. after being trapped in a door

Ledum – puncture wounds and bites

Mag phos – headaches and toothache

Phosphorus – nosebleeds and bleeding gums e.g. after tooth falls out

Pulsatilla – coughs, colds, earaches,

APPENDIX 1

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RECOMMENDED READING

Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship
www.steinerwaldorf.org.uk

Ofsted report
www.ofsted.gov.uk

RECOMMENDED READING

Books on Steiner Waldorf Education

'Waldorf Education' C Clouder & M Rawson,
'Free to Learn' Lynne Oldfield
'Waldorf Education in Theory and Practice' R Blunt
'School as a Journey' Torin Finser
'Understanding Waldorf Education' Jack Petrash
'Educating through Art: the Steiner School Approach' Agnes Noble

Early Childhood

'You are your child's First Teacher' Rahima Baldwin,
'Ready to Learn – from birth to school readiness' M. Rawson & M. Rose
'Work and Play in Early Childhood' Freya Jaffke
'The Incarnating Child', J Salter
'The First Three Years of the Child' K Konig
'Genius of Play' Sally Jenkinson

Practical Activities and Festivals

'All Year Round'
'Families, Festivals and Food'
'Festivals Together – a guide to multi-cultural celebration'
'The Children's Year'
'Earthwise'
'The Christmas Craft Book'
'The Easter Craft Book'
'The Harvest Craft Book'
'Making Waldorf Dolls'
'Painting with Children '
'Magic Wool and More Magic Wool'
'Making Flower Children'

Many of these books and lots more are stocked in the School library or the School Shop and if not can be ordered for you. Please ask in the School Office or see current shop price list on the noticeboard.

APPENDIX 2

THE INFLUENCE OF TELEVISION

The issue of television is one surrounded with strong feelings and opinions and you may have already sensed that Steiner schools do not encourage the watching of television or computer games.

As parents of young children we may feel that one of our roles is to protect and defend our child's fantasy life from the increasing assaults of television.

The pictures on TV and images of many computer games are especially damaging to the pictorial consciousness of these early years. They impress themselves upon the child's Soul with a power they cannot possibly have for the adult who thinks abstractly and judges from experience.

The great difference between adult intellectual perception and the child's pictorial perception causes many adults to underestimate the effect of television's pictures in the impressionable child. After all, they are only pictures, we adults think. For the child, the pictures are his/her thinking. He/she does not have the protection from the message that the adult has. Therefore parents are encouraged to limit the amount of time children are exposed to the media of TV, DVD's and computer games.

Children's play can also be highly influenced by TV and this can bring a negative and often disturbing behaviour. Parents are asked to strictly monitor their child/children's viewing. While teachers would ultimately prefer that all children's viewing is minimised, they recognise that you as a parent/guardian must decide the role that TV and computers play in your family.

INDEX

School history	2
Introduction to Steiner Education	3
Mission statement	4
School structure and organisation –administration	5
Staff	7
Rainbow Toddler Group	8
Kindergarten	9
Lower School	13
Curriculum	15
School hours	17
Afternoon Club	18
S.E.N Policy	19
Admissions Procedure	21
Financial information	22
Communication	24
Concerns and Problems	25
Complaints Policy	26
Role of Parents and Guardians	27
Festivals	29
Basic school details	30
School Practice and Guidelines	33
Administration of Medicine	35
First Aid	36
Appendix 1 Further information and recommended reading	37
Appendix 2 Television	38

NOTES