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Information for families approaching the school

(Revised September 2016)

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE

The admissions procedure differs depending upon whether you are applying for Early Years (Kindergarten) or Classes 1 to 8.

Admission Procedure for Early Years

Stage 1

1. Arrange to attend an Enquirers' Morning. This is a mandatory requirement for families applying to the school and must be attended before an interview can be requested.
2. Request an interview – this can be done at the end of an Enquirers Morning or at any time thereafter.
3. Complete and return a Child Biography. You will be provided with guidelines for writing this.
4. Provide the school with any additional relevant information e.g. specialist reports if your child has any special needs or conditions potentially affecting their performance at school.

Stage 2

1. Once these have been received an interview will be arranged and confirmed.
2. At the interview you will meet two Early Years teachers who will ask about your child and you about the Early Years Department and what it offers your child. It is important that you bring your child with you so that the Early Years teachers may meet them.
3. The second part of the interview involves a discussion of the school's financial contribution system and an explanation of the non-financial commitment

expected of parents. This is held with either the School Secretary or the School Administrator.

4. After the interview the school will write to you to say whether or not a place can be offered. Information on replying to an offer of a place can be found in the section entitled: **What to do when you are offered a place.**

Enquirers Mornings

These are held eight times a year, usually on a Thursday morning. The morning consists of a talk, a Question & Answer session and a tour of the school including classroom visits.

These mornings are not suitable for children so please make childcare arrangements. We make exception where very young breastfeeding infants who need to accompany their mother. In this case it is helpful to bring a second adult with you so that you do not miss part of the proceedings if your baby is crying and needs to be taken out of the room

Admission Procedure for Classes 1-8

Stage 1

1. Arrange to attend an Enquirers' Morning. This is a mandatory requirement for families applying to the school and must be attended before an interview can be requested.
2. Request an interview – this can be done at the end of an Enquirers Morning or at any time thereafter.
3. Complete and return a Child Biography. You will be provided with guidelines for writing this.
4. Provide a report from your child's current school and any additional relevant information e.g. specialist reports if your child has any special needs or conditions potentially affecting their performance at school.

Stage 2

1. Once a biography and school reports have been received we will contact you to arrange a visit for your child. This visit usually lasts 2/3 weeks.
2. An interview will also be arranged with the Class Teacher; this is usually towards the end of your child's trial period so their progress can be discussed.
3. The school will write to you to say whether or not a place can be offered.

What to do when you are offered a place

If you are offered a place:

1. Reply in writing (or by email) stating you wish to take up the offer of a place including the registration fee of £50.
2. A place will be held open for a period of two weeks and will be confirmed upon receipt of a completed financial contribution form. If this form is not received then the offer of a place will be withdrawn.
3. Upon receipt of the completed financial contribution form and confirmation of the offer, a place will be held open until the date stated in the letter of acceptance. If you are unable to take up the place by this date it will be withdrawn unless otherwise agreed. (Please let us know as soon as possible if you decide not to come to the school as there may be a waiting list.)

CLASS SIZES

The school is flexible about what constitutes a full class. A class is usually considered full at 24-26 children. In certain circumstances a child will be accepted into a theoretically full class if the teacher feels that they will fit in well with the balance and dynamic of the class. It is important to remember that class and teacher have been together since the age of six and the group has formed a distinctive character. Our primary responsibility is to the children already in our care and this will drive any decision as to whether to take an addition child into an already full class.

WHAT IS THE PROVISION FOR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS?

The school has a desire to admit every child sincerely wishing to join us. Each class is able to accept some children with specific learning difficulties and extra help for these children is available from the dedicated Learning Support Teacher. In some cases a class may have an assistant whose role will be to help all the children in the class.

Children with special needs will be assessed with regard to:

1. Their own needs
2. The resources available in the Learning Support Department to meet those needs
3. The make-up and balance of the class they are approaching.

This assessment will take place before a place in the class is offered.

WHAT HOURS WILL MY CHILD ATTEND SCHOOL?

Children start in kindergarten in the September following their third birthday. It is usual that three mornings a week are offered, from 8.50 to 12.40pm.

Children stay in Kindergarten up to age six. Children in Kindergarten are offered between three and five mornings a week depending on age, needs and stamina.

Children progress to Class 1 for the school year in which they will be seven.

The school day in Classes 1 to 5 starts at 8.50am, and at 8.35am for Classes 6 to 8.

Morning sessions end at 12.45pm and all day sessions end at 3.30pm. Attendance is as shown in the table:

Age (rising)	Class	Start Time	Attendance
7	Class 1	8.50	5 full days except Tuesday & Thursday afternoons
8	Class 2	8.50	5 full days except Tuesday afternoon
9	Class 3	8.50	5 full days
10	Class 4	8.50	5 full days
11	Class 5	8.50	5 full days
12	Class 6	8.35	5 full days
13	Class 7	8.35	5 full days
14	Class 8	8.35	5 full days

Our Aim

Our aim is to make Steiner Waldorf education available to any family that sincerely wishes to join the school.

Our contribution system is based on honesty, trust and openness and we ask that each of you looks deep into your hearts and meets with us on this level

The education we offer is a gift to the child; any financial contribution you are asked to make is a contribution to the school as a whole. It is not intended to reflect the “cost” of your child's education. That is why the amount requested does not rise greatly as children progress through the school, even though the education in the older classes is considerably more expensive to provide.

The recommended contributions are GBP4500 per child in Early Years and GBP6600 per child in the main school.

If you are unable to contribute at the per child amount we ask for a contribution based on your gross family income as shown below:

<u>Total Gross Family Income</u>	<u>Minimum per family rate</u>	<u>Minimum contribution</u>
Up to £10,000	£1,000	£1,000
£10,000 - £20,000	10% of income	£1,000 - £2,000
£20,000 - £30,000	11% of income	£2,200 - £3,300
£30,000 - £40,000	12% of income	£3,600 - £4,800
Over £40,000	13% of income	£5,200 upwards

Please note that the table above gives only our minimum recommendations. It is expected that families able to contribute more than the minimum will do so. In deciding your contribution, we ask our families to consider the value of the education we offer as well as the actual cost of provision. We sincerely hope that families will contribute as much as they can.

Our aim is to find ways to make Steiner Waldorf education available to any family who sincerely wish to be part of the school community. Therefore, if you are unable to pay the recommended contribution you can propose to contribute a lower amount that is suitable to your family's circumstances.

All families who propose to contribute a lower amount based on their family's circumstances will need to agree this at their contributions interview. At this interview all family finances will be openly discussed and an appropriate contribution figure agreed upon subject to final approval by the School Administrator. In some cases, further reviews may be required with the hope that contributions can be increased as the year progresses or as circumstances change. In view of the actual cost of offering this education, families need to contribute as much as they can.

Other Costs

A registration fee of £50 is payable when a child begins a 'visit' in the school.

Additional costs for children in the Early Years are minimal. For children in Classes 1-8 there will be costs associated with class trips and outings; these costs will increase as the trips become more adventurous. In addition, Eurythmy shoes (£25) and Flutes (£55 in Class 1) will need to be paid for.

NON-FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

The school also requests a non-financial contribution in the form of practical help from families.

Our school was founded by parents and we rely upon the active involvement of parents to keep it running. There are several ways in which parents contribute in a voluntary way. We call this the "non-financial contribution" which, together with the money people pay, allows the school to continue. As a way of sustaining and nourishing the school community it has many advantages:

- It provides a route for parents to get involved in the community and to meet other parents as they work together
- It gives parents a sense of "ownership" of the school, while saving money on outside contractors
- Children see their parents as part of the school
- Tasks are done with love and care, which contributes to the school's special atmosphere

Ways in which parents contribute include:

- Cleaning their child's classroom – on a rota basis
- School Workdays – repairing the fabric of the buildings, improving the grounds – great fun
- Major fund-raising and cultural events, such as the Advent and Summer fairs, for which you would be asked to help on a stall and make produce

- Joining one of the Mandate Groups to help run the school. These cover most non-teaching aspects of school life – Estates, Finance, HR and PR.
- Become a school trustee – the school is a charity and limited company, if you feel you have the skills to help run such an organisation then we welcome your offer of assistance.
- Assisting the education by helping out in specific areas such as reading, handwork, languages, cooking, music, special needs, class trips and plays. (Please note that this requires a completed DBS form)
- School shop, café, craft group, teachers lunches

In practice, and with the exception of the classroom cleaning rota, which is dependent upon the participation of everybody, parents are encouraged to choose the way of contributing that suits them best. Every family is different in terms of what they can offer, and the school values every contribution, whether it is cake-making, business consultancy, gardening or even an additional financial contribution.

Families joining the school will be invited to a meeting about this during their first or second term. All we ask is that once they have had the chance to get to know the school and how it works they make conscious decisions about how they wish to contribute and communicate these to the group coordinating this area.

Further reading – Steiner Education

Too Much Too Soon: Early Learning and the Erosion of Childhood. Author: Richard House. Publisher: Hawthorn Press. Date published: 2011. ISBN: 1907359044.

Meeting the Child in Steiner Kindergartens: An exploration of beliefs, values and practices. Author: Ed R. Parker-Rees. Publisher: Routledge. Date published: 2011. ISBN 978-0-415-60392-8.

Educating through Art: the Steiner School Approach. Author: Agnes Nobel. Publisher: Floris Books. Date published: 1991. ISBN: 0863151876.

Education Towards Freedom Author: F. Carlgren. Publisher: Lanthorn Press. Date published: 1996. ISBN: 0906155320.

Genius of Play Author: Sally Jenkinson. Publisher: Hawthorn Press. Date published: 2002. ISBN: 1903458048.

Rudolf Steiner Education – An Introductory Reader. Compiled by: Christopher Clouder. Publisher: Rudolf Steiner Press. Date published: 2003. ISBN: 9781855841185.

School as a Journey Author: Torin M Finser. Publisher: Anthroposophic Press. Date published: 1994. ISBN: 0880103892.

Waldorf Education Author(s): Christopher Clouder, Martyn Rawson. Publisher: Floris Books. Date published: 1998. ISBN: 0863152708.

You are Your Child's First Teacher Author: Rahima Baldwin Dancy. Publisher: Hawthorn Press. Date published: 2006. ISBN: 9780890879672.

Teaching as a Lively Art Author: Marjorie Spock. Publisher: Anthroposophic Press. Date published: 1985. ISBN: 9780880101271.