

Norwich Steiner School

Prospectus

01603 611175

info@norwichsteinerschool.co.uk

The **Vision of Norwich Steiner School** is to provide a Steiner-Waldorf curriculum for pupils from age 3 – 18 years of age with pupils being able to leave the school as balanced, well-rounded and mature young adults, able to pursue their own futures and destinies with confidence and self belief.

Our Privilege

As an all-through-school we are privileged to see the children progress through the school, and interacting together along the way- from the foundation building freedom of kindergarten, up through the lower school and then back downstairs again to the upper school, to see them grow and change, develop their identities, interests and ideas. And the children look ahead to where they will follow, know where they are going and see the possibilities the future may bring.

Summary of Educational Provision

Kindergarten The essence of kindergarten life is play. Through spontaneous, imaginative, social play and creative activities in our carefully planned environment children aged 3¼ to 6 years old are free to explore and grow into their bodies and into the world.

Lower School Pupils in the lower school follow a broad curriculum, where literacy and numeracy are introduced gradually and learning is enriched through music, movement and an artistic approach. Children are able to learn at their own pace, free from the pressures of testing and examinations, so that they can grow with confidence and with their self-esteem intact.

Upper School Our vibrant and friendly upper school for pupils up to 18/19 years of age offers a truly liberating curriculum that respects, guides and supports the development of individuality. Free from the pressure of GCSE and A Level examinations, pupils may opt instead to study for a fully accredited Level 3 School Leaving Qualification, based on the Steiner-Waldorf Curriculum, called the Steiner School Certificate (SSC).

Experience the school for yourself.....

At our last school inspection pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was found to be outstanding, and their behaviour excellent: they are friendly, open, lively and considerate of one another. Pupils said they love coming to the school, that they feel safe, valued as individuals and believe that their teachers care deeply about them and work hard to ensure that they succeed.

We invite you to visit our school and experience the atmosphere for yourself. The most frequent opportunities we offer are Introductory Mornings & Kindergarten Open Afternoons. There is no charge for either, but to minimise disruption to the classes, numbers are limited and so booking is essential. See below for more details and for dates.

Kindergarten

There is no rush in kindergarten.

There is no base line-testing, no five-year-old literacy or maths assessments, no measuring and comparing with others (apart from the usual 'I'm taller', 'No, look, I am', "Well, you had more snack than me.').

There is no formal teaching or learning. We leave that for school, later.

The children grow, develop and learn all the same, all the better; through playing, through doing, through being themselves and being together. Through being allowed to just 'be'. They become sociable, co-operative, imaginative, creative, confident and caring. Their natural interest in words, reading, writing and numbers develops naturally. And they learn to enjoy learning.

We give children time and space to develop and learn naturally, each at their own pace, in an environment that is both restful and inspiring. Our morning is structured around familiar routines, within which the children feel safe and are free to flourish:

After settling in and catching up with friends we have circle time, sharing seasonal songs and stories, immersing ourselves in words, in the rhythm of language, and of life.

Practical and artistic activities provide opportunities to develop fine motor skills, or 'nimble fingers' and foster a creative approach to learning. Indoor play (with natural materials) encourages sociability and negotiation as the children transform the space, constructing new environments and trying on different roles. Building dens, houses, house-boats, trains, planes, shops, making rivers, oceans, forests, becoming cats, dogs, horses, kings, mothers, fathers, pilots... and hungry.

At snack time we eat a healthy meal, and catch up on the latest news, jokes and (often tall) stories.

Outside the children range-free, running, jumping, stretching outwards and upwards, rolling down the hill, burrowing in the sandpit, playing house in the playhouse, strolling in the labyrinth... then winding down

with a story before going home- for a rest.

Children begin to join us from the age of 3 years and 3 months, and stay in our mixed-age group until they have turned 6, and are ready for school. Sessions run from 9.00am-1.00pm, Mondays to Fridays, with afternoon sessions on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

The kindergarten provision was rated '*Outstanding*' at the school's last inspection, and are fully recognised by the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship.

Afternoon kindergarten

A gentle continuation of the kindergarten day, the afternoon kindergarten sessions begin at 1pm with a healthy packed lunch. After eating and chatting with friends at the table it is time to rest awhile - snuggling down in the cosy-corner, looking at books and sharing stories, playing quietly or working on our craft projects.

Then we go to the garden for an hour to play, potter about in the labyrinth, dig in the sandpit, help with some gardening, or just bask in the sun (or run in the rain).

We always have a story just before the children go home at 3.30.

Growing Through Kindergarten- Recommended Attendance and Ages

Kindergarten works most harmoniously and is of greatest benefit to all of the children when there is a good mixture of ages. As they play together each day the children really get to know each other, and the group takes on a lovely, sociable, family feeling.

A mixed age group allows all of the children to shine- the older ones develop a caring, helpful attitude towards the younger ones, setting good examples and inspiring play, and the younger ones are able to join in with games, to watch and to imitate.

3¼ - 4 year olds settle into the rhythm, routine and habits of kindergarten by becoming familiar with the staff, other children and environment, so they come for a minimum of three consecutive mornings a week to start with (although some are ready to attend on four days. We find that this builds a firm footing for their kindergarten education as good habits are reinforced and independence and self-confidence will then grow more quickly.

4 to 5 year old children are particularly imaginative and socially versatile, so are expected to attend a minimum of four days each week to enable them to further develop their co-operative and creative play. This is important for language (and, later, literacy) development, and their increased attendance is of great benefit to the whole group as they bring a beautiful balance and harmony, linking the older and younger children in play, caring for the little ones, and looking up to and imitating the older ones.

From their fifth birthday onwards the children are completely immersed into kindergarten life, attending every morning, contributing to and fully benefiting from the whole kindergarten experience. Our five-year-olds are proud to start to help with the general running of the morning (setting the table or washing up) and as their sense of responsibility and ability grows they look forward to the new activities and responsibilities to come. Attending afternoon kindergarten for one or two afternoons a week helps to prepare them for the longer days in school later on.

Our 6 year-olds truly are the leaders of the kindergarten. Totally familiar with the environment, the rhythm and the routines, they are at home

now, they are in their element. They have many new privileges, projects and responsibilities- they serve food, mend toys and help the younger children with their waterproofs. They organise and supervise play, enjoying passing on their knowledge and skills to the younger ones.

During the summer term they attend an additional afternoon session where they complete craft projects and prepare for the next stage in their journey- upstairs to Class One.

Further details about attendance requirements may be found in the School's admission policy.

Lower School

Ethos There is no testing in lower school: no measuring of children against each other, no comparing of achievements. We value pupils for who they are, and seek to nourish each child's inherent abilities, supporting them through our enriching curriculum to reach their full creative, academic and human potential. We believe that it is wrong for a child to feel that he or she has failed, based on criteria set by some faceless authority.

There are no interactive whiteboards, no computers, no iPads or other electronic devices in lower school classrooms: rather there are blackboards and chalk, paintings and drawings, musical instruments, flowers, plants and art materials. Classrooms are decorated in supportive, enhancing colours, and have high ceilings and views of the treetops.

The rhythms of the school day support the children in their learning, and we mark the yearly circles with festivals - shaping, baking, slaying and sharing dragon bread at Michaelmas, walking the labyrinth with lanterns at Martinmas, treading the Advent spiral, planting earth-candles at Candlemas, hunting for Easter eggs, dancing round the maypole on May Day, making paper doves for Whitsun, and jumping a full flaming fire at St. John's, helping the children to experience their place in the world.

Teaching and Learning Teaching is creative and artistic, visually and imaginatively appealing and catering for different styles of learning and different types of learner. Class teachers usually stay with their class all through lower school, so the teachers and children really get to know each other. This allows teachers to set appropriate and realistic expectations, based on their on-going observations of the class.

Learning is active and sensory, and the rhythmic, lively and vibrant lessons often feel like a conversation: an on going dialogue between the children and the teacher, as they explore a subject together. Ideas are exchanged, questioned, built upon; possibilities extended: "We could..." 'How do I...?' "What if we..." 'Let's...'. patterns are noticed, connections are made.

Everyone is involved and engaged, inspired and encouraged, recognised as individuals and aware of each other, of interests and needs. The

children enjoy each other's company and there is an easy, fluid interaction between them and the teacher. Classes seem to have their own momentum - moving along on their journey, through the lesson, the day, the term, the seasons, the year, the curriculum, the school: together.

Literacy and numeracy are introduced gradually, through story and rhythmic movement, building on the interest generated and the seeds planted in kindergarten, and will continue to be taught with visual language and gestures, and through direct, physical experience throughout the school.

Subject Lesson themes are entwined with those of the main lesson blocks. For example, when Class 5 is studying Ancient Greece, the children might be modelling a Medusa, drawing a discus thrower, painting a pot, trimming a tunic in handwork, and training for the Steiner Olympics: throwing javelins, wrestling, jumping and running 'marathons'...

The Lower School day After experiencing the space, time and freedom to play, learn and develop at their own paces in kindergarten, 6-7 year old children are ready for the exciting new world of school, of letters and numbers when they move upstairs to lower school.

Class teachers greet the children individually with a handshake every morning, and allow some time to catch up with friends, or perhaps do some drawing, before class starts at 9.00.

The first part of the day is spent in 'main lesson', weaving together physical, rhythmic, musical, practical and artistic activities with oral and written work. Main lessons are taught in three-week subject blocks around a curriculum topic, such as literacy, numeracy, geography or history.

Morning break is at 11.00 and after a healthy snack the children go outside to play together for half an hour - in the playground or the field, surrounded by trees, flowers, and actual mud - den building, running, chasing, skipping, stilt-walking, hop-scotching, four-squaring, shooting hoops or storming the castle.

Then the children have subject lessons: French and German (taught

initially through games, songs and poems), music, violin, drama, art, painting, handwork, modelling (with clay or beeswax), or form drawing, and later gardening, woodwork, games, religion and science.

After a packed lunch at 1.00 it's outside for more fresh air, exercise and socialising, before afternoon lessons start at 2.00. We aim to balance our day with the more academic subjects in the mornings, and the more practical and physical lessons in the afternoons.

Pupils discover the joy of movement through a rich curriculum of children's games and sports: an inclusive programme at the centre of our curriculum, which meets the developmental needs of children throughout the school, promoting physical agility, social awareness, self-esteem and cooperation. Activities include traditional games, as well as athletics, swimming, volleyball, basketball, tennis, climbing and sailing.

Children are inspired by and connected to their natural surroundings, so we spend as much time outside as we can. In their gardening classes the children are busy transforming the kindergarten field - planting borders, vegetable patches and fruit trees, digging and weeding, watering and feeding, and laying in the grass; watching the garden grow.

At the end of the school day the children and teachers shake hands again, to say goodbye, until the morning, when they will take up their conversation anew.

Upper School

Norwich Steiner School opened its Upper School in September 2012. The Upper school is now in its fourth year and can currently accommodate pupils aged 13 to 18 years old. The Upper School will continue to grow and develop right through to Class 12/13, when the oldest children will be 18/19 years old and ready to take their next step in life.

The school is committed to supporting students in realising their potential and enabling them to follow, with confidence, their individual paths. The Steiner-Waldorf Curriculum, which aims to meet the needs of the child at each stage of his or her development, provides the rich foundation upon which such journeys can be built.

The creative breadth and depth of the Waldorf Curriculum, together with appropriate teaching practices, encourages the emergence of healthy young adults capable of independent and creative thinking, healthy social relationships and the ability to make choices and to succeed in all aspects of contemporary life.

The commitment of the school is to work with each pupil to ensure he/she is suitably prepared in whatever way is most appropriate to support that individual in their next step, when they leave this school at age 18/19. Put simply, for a pupil wishing to progress into higher education, this might involve them being supported in developing a portfolio of independent work in their chosen area; quite possibly to a standard more commonly seen in the first year of a relevant degree course than in the work of a pupil of sixth form age.

Alternatively, for a pupil wishing to follow a more vocational pathway, or perhaps learn a trade, more of an emphasis would be placed on developing good practical skills and accessing a range of relevant work placements.

Quick Facts about the Steiner School Certificate (SSC)

- A rigorous qualification is based on continuous assessment and tests throughout the year, rather than end of year exams.
- Externally moderated and quality-controlled.
- Content based on a rich curriculum, with emphasis on building skills in thinking and understanding, rather than simply learning facts.

- Assessment based on lesson content, rather than lesson content being controlled by assessment criteria.
- Qualification approved for entry to New Zealand universities and developed for use not only in New Zealand but in other countries.

We are in the process of releasing a series of authentic short videos where pupils relate their experiences of the SSC and the Upper school. Visit our website page to view them.

Norwich Steiner School & the SSC

Pupils age 15 years and above now have the option of registering for the Steiner School Certificate (SSC). The SSC is a qualification approved and registered by the New Zealand government and has been developed to incorporate a rigorous and detailed external moderation system, thus providing very high standards of quality assurance.

The New Zealand education system has historically been based on that developed in the UK, and in terms of required standards of entry into Universities and colleges of further education, New Zealand qualifications are considered comparable to those offered in the UK. Under Commonwealth arrangements, it is now possible for pupils in UK Steiner Schools to register for the SSC and gain a school leaving qualification which is complementary to the Steiner-Waldorf Curriculum.

The SSC is a 3-year course and pupils have to be at least 15 years of age to register for it. In terms of school leaving qualifications, the SSC is most comparable, in terms of its interdisciplinary approach, to the International Baccalaureate. Although the general expectation is that pupils will do all three years, with the achievements in each year providing building blocks for the next, it is possible for pupils to join a class which is part way through the 3-year course, provided there is evidence of them having achieved comparable standards of work in the setting from which they have come.

All pupils have to study and participate in the whole curriculum, although they can choose a higher level of assessment in the topics they have the greatest interest in. Therefore each pupil is not only able to emerge with a certificate which reflects their personal strengths, but can keep developing their skills and achievements in a range of areas -

something that cannot happen when a student is asked to specialise too early.

If a pupil doesn't want to do the SSC.....

The commitment of the school is to work with each pupil to ensure he/she is suitably prepared in whatever way is most appropriate to support that individual in their next step, when they leave this school at age 18/19. Put simply, for a pupil wishing to progress into higher education who does not wish to pursue the SSC, this might involve them being supported in developing a portfolio of independent work in their chosen area; quite possibly to a standard more commonly seen in the first year of a relevant degree course than in the work of a pupil of sixth form age.

Alternatively, for a pupil wishing to follow a more vocational pathway, or perhaps learn a trade, more of an emphasis would be placed on developing good practical skills and accessing a range of relevant work placements.

Overseas Visiting Students

Norwich Steiner School welcomes applications from Steiner pupils from other countries who may wish to join our school for a period of time ranging from 6 weeks to one year. We are able to offer provision for class 9, 10, 11 and 12 pupils.

Norwich is a lovely historic City and the school is located within 10 minutes walk of the centre. There are lots of cobbled streets and quaint back alleyways, with modern shopping facilities sensitively integrated into the city so that there is quite a cosmopolitan feel to the City. The Norfolk Broads and the coast are just a stones throw from the city, and regular trains between Norwich and the Capital, make day trips to London to see some of the sights, an easy opportunity.

Admissions

As the approach to education followed by Steiner Schools differs considerably from that which is offered in the mainstream sector, it is important before applying for a place for a child in this school, that parents understand something of the educational philosophy and curriculum we follow.

In addition to any research or reading parents may do, we advise parents to attend an Introductory morning whenever possible.

Our regular introductory mornings take place during a normal school day. Pupils conduct a tour of the classrooms, pausing in each to allow you time to observe the lessons. After the tour staff will join you for some light refreshments and to answer any questions you may have. There is also the opportunity for you to inspect the work of pupils of a range of ages and ability whilst you have your refreshments.

Please ask for a copy of our Admissions Policy and when you are ready, please contact the school for an application form. If you have any queries or questions, please phone the school or send an email and we will be happy to help.

Class age chart

The following chart is intended to provide a guide for parents to see which class their child might be in and the equivalent year in mainstream schools.

As in many of the newer Steiner Schools, the class sizes are relatively small and a combined-class system is in operation. Classes vary in size with the pioneering classes at the front of the school naturally being smaller and the largest class size comprising 20 children.

Class name:	Steiner class	Mainstream equivalent	Age of pupils
The Orchard	Kindergarten	Pre-school & reception	3 ¼ – 6
Maple	1 & 2	2 & 3	6-8
Sequoia	3 & 4	4 & 5	8-10
Willow	5 & 6 combined	6 & 7	10-12
Oak	7 & 8 combined	8 & 9	12-14
Birch (Upper school)	9 & 10 combined	10 & 11	14-16
Elder (Upper school)	11 & 12 combined	12 & 13	16-18

Fees

Steiner schools in the UK operate almost exclusively in the independent sector, with the exceptions of the Steiner Academy in Hereford and three new Free Schools (Frome, Exeter and Bristol). Until such time as state funding may be extended to all Steiner Schools, a large proportion of the running costs will need to come from parental fees and fund-raising activities.

In Norwich Steiner School, we offer 5 full days (9am-3.30pm) for all children from Class 1 upwards. There is, however, the option for parents to take younger children out on one or two afternoons a week should they so wish.

Fees for 2015-2016

Kindergarten £3,670 / year (for five sessions a week)

Lower School £6,155 / year

Upper School £6,600 / annum

Afternoon kindergarten £13.00 / session

Concessions

Fees in the School and Kindergarten are set at a level to cover the basic day-to-day expenditure of these provisions. Please note that in the absence of state funding or a generous benefactor, our ability to offer concessionary rates to families on low incomes is strictly limited and dependent upon the majority of people being able to pay full fees.

However, in line with many other Steiner Schools throughout the UK, we would not willingly turn away any child on the sole grounds of inability to pay and would endeavour to work with any family committed to the education in order to find a way forward that would allow the child to be accepted into the kindergarten or school.

Before requesting a concession on payment of full fees, we ask that you please consider whether there are relatives/godparents of the child, with a family interest in their future, and who may be willing to make a regular contribution to their education, thus easing pressure on the very limited resources of the charity. We ask parents to also please note that the school is unable to subsidise families where expensive or unrealistic lifestyle choices contribute to an inability to pay school fees.

Governance & management

Rudolf Steiner gave two main indications for the running of a school. In the first he said that teachers and those running the school should try to make decisions *together* rather than one person, such as a headmistress or master being in charge. The second indication Steiner gave is that the teachers should be involved in the *running* of the school, to help them remain connected with real world practicalities and to keep their teaching relevant to the age in which they lived and taught, but also to ensure that child pedagogy was held central in the decision-making process.

That was nearly 100 years ago and in Steiner Schools today, those involved in running them still strive to incorporate these basic principles into a modern framework of legislation and regulation. As Norwich Steiner School has grown and evolved from its first days as a school, so too has its structure.

The school has a small body of trustees who are responsible for matters of School Governance and who maintain an objective overview of the whole. In January 2012, in response to advice from the Schools Inspection Service, the trustees appointed a management team to ensure clear lines of communication, accountability and responsibility were developed and maintained.

The management team comprises teaching and administration staff. More details and a copy of the Management Team terms of reference can be obtained from the school or downloaded from the school's website.

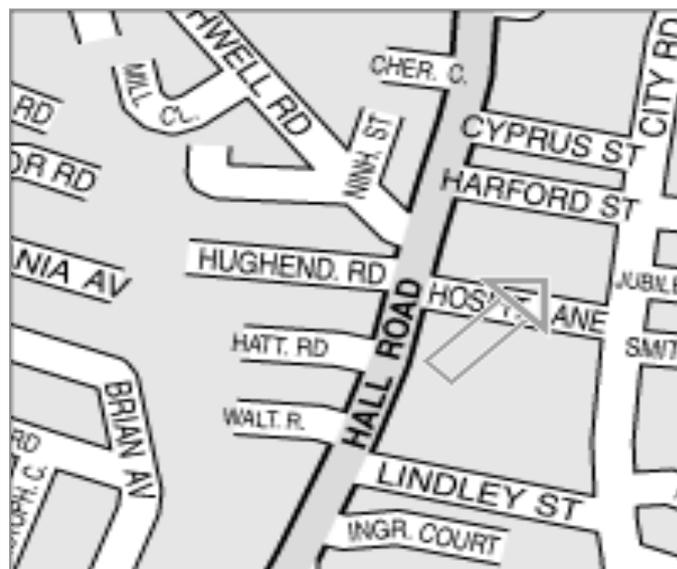
Contacting the School

By email: info@norwichsteinerschool.co.uk

By telephone: 01603 611175 attended 8.45am-4.00pm Monday-Friday, answerphone at other times.

By post to:

Norwich Steiner School,
Hospital Lane,
Norwich
NR1 2HW



For more information, including policies, procedures, past school newsletters and information about the history of the school, please see our school website

www.norwichsteinerschool.co.uk