

# Talking Trees

The newsletter for Norwich Steiner School, Kindergartens & Parent & Child Groups

15<sup>th</sup> July 2010

## Dates for your diary

**Workdays** during summer holidays will be running on the dates below between 10am and 4pm. If, in the unlikely event, we have to cancel a workday, we will send an email around to let you know. Please check with Carol before attending if you do not. The phone messages are checked at the school most days even in school holidays.

Please join us if you can. We plan to offer a simple lunch on the workdays to refresh the workforce, so even if you can offer to help prepare this, we would appreciate your help. Attending workdays during the summer holiday provide an opportunity to keep in touch with each other as well as helping with the maintenance of the building. A few hours of your time makes all the difference to making sure the school is properly cared for, so please do try to come to at least one workday this summer holiday.

**Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> August** - workday

**Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> August** - workday

**Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> August** - workday

**Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> September** – cleaning workday

**Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September** - First day of new term

## Message from the Trustees

By Antoinette Berry

Many congratulations to all the support teams, the teaching and administration staff, the young people and the parents who worked so hard, for so long, to make the Summer Fayre such a huge success!

Our thanks to everyone who took part in this communal effort to raise much - needed funds and to present the Norwich Steiner School in such a positive light.

**Information note from finance team** – so far, the summer fayre has raised an amazing £4, 475; once expenses have been reclaimed, the expected profit will be over £3.5K. Wonderful!

## Government Free Schools Initiative

Chris Mitchell, Trustee

Some parents have been asking if there might be some financial or other benefits from our becoming part of this scheme. The situation is not entirely clear for independent schools such as ours as the emphasis has been on state schools applying to become free schools.

The trustees discussed this at their last meeting and decided we should find out more about the proposals and formally register our interest. By doing this we will not be committing ourselves to anything but it will enable us to understand more about what is required and the potential impact on Steiner education and our particular circumstances. The Fellowship is also carrying out some work for Steiner schools in this regard, which we will monitor.

## New Appointments

**Class Teacher** - We would like to congratulate Anka Krätzig on becoming our next class teacher; Anka has worked at the school for two years teaching German and Handwork to all classes, as well as providing supply cover for the class teachers in times of sickness. As she will now be spending a large portion of her time working with the new class one, (called Willow class), we are currently seeking a new handwork teacher for Birch, Elder and Oak.

**Kindergarten teacher** - We are also delighted to be informing you that Debora Walker, who started working in Chestnut kindergarten as the assistant and then as the teacher on a supply basis, has applied for and been offered the post of Kindergarten Teacher. Debora is in the final of three years work completing her Steiner Kindergarten Teacher training and has been involved with Steiner education for approximately 7 years. She also has two children in the Lower School.

**Woodwork teacher** – new to the school is Martin Dyer, who will be teaching woodwork to Elder class from September. Martin has a great multitude of practical skills and teaching experience (former teacher at Bracondale Boys School) and we are hoping he will also be working with Birch and Elder classes for one double lesson a week, doing practical projects to support their main lesson curriculum.

**Gardening** – As well as woodwork for class 6/7 children (next year for Elder class), specific gardening tasks and responsibilities become a formal part of the school curriculum at age 12/13. Mark Lord, a parent of children in parent & child group, kindergarten and also in the Lower School has kindly volunteered to teach the gardening curriculum to Elder Class one afternoon a week from September.

## Vacancies

**Kindergarten assistant** – part-time vacancy, available from September, working as an assistant to Debora in Chestnut kindergarten. Job description & application form from Carol and also available for download from our school website [www.norwichsteinerschool.co.uk](http://www.norwichsteinerschool.co.uk)

Previous experiences of working in a Steiner Kindergarten and ideally an NVQ level 3 in childcare (or working towards this or a similar qualification) are desirable attributes.

**Handwork teacher** – we particularly require a new handwork teacher from September as none of the existing staff are able to take on this role, and it is a core subject area in the curriculum. The post involves three double lessons a week; one double lesson each for Oak, Birch and Elder classes. Good skills in knitting, crocheting, sewing and other handwork related activities (e.g felting) are essential, as is the ability to teach and hold a class.

**Other vacancies** – we may shortly have other vacancies available, including possibly for a full-time Learning Support Assistant. All details and application forms will be available for downloading from our website as soon as we have more information. If you do not have access to the internet, but think you may be interested in working in the school, please register your interest with Carol, who will be regularly checking the school answer phone during the holiday.

## PE kit, coats & outdoor wear

Please could ALL parents check your child's cloakroom for any items which may belong to your child by the last day of term and take them home. Over the year, a considerable volume of clothing has accumulated in some of the cloakrooms and changing areas, so that many items of clothing probably no longer fit the children to whom they belong.

It is particularly important for the parents of children in Birch and Elder classes to make sure you or your child have checked the cloakrooms, as children in these classes have various items of PE kit spread around the changing rooms; these definitely need to be taken home and freshened up!

Any wellies, coats or other items of clothing left behind at the end of term, will be placed in lost property during the summer holiday and may be collected during workdays (advertised overleaf). Anything left unclaimed by the end of the summer holiday will be donated to the local charity shop.

## Communications from Parents

Thank you so much to all the parents who have so far returned the parent questionnaires. We greatly value your feedback as it helps us to identify areas where we need to improve. We take your views very seriously and once we have analysed the results, we aim to summarise the main lessons learnt from receiving your feedback.

Thank you also to everyone for so cooperatively and positively using the 'simple concerns process' (see forms in entrance hall) to let us know when you are worried or concerned about something. Staff working in the school really value your using this process as a form of communication.

Putting a concern in writing gives an appropriate level of formality and helps us to ensure that adequate thought and discussion takes place between appropriate staff in the school; it helps us to more fully address issues.

So whilst we also value parents speaking directly to members of staff if they have concerns, please do not feel that you are causing trouble by using the Concerns Process, you are actually being really helpful.